

1818



# Poverty of Intellectualism in India

001.2  
NAR

V. R. NARLA





Price : Rs. 6-00  
\$ 3











*Special Lecture 73*

# Poverty of Intellectualism in India

V R NARLA



1978



Poverty of Intellectalism in India—by V R Narla, Published by the Director, Prasaraṅga, University of Mysore, Manasaṅgotri, Mysore-570012. First Edition 1978, Demy Octavo, 8+75. Price Rs. 6-00 \$ 3.

001.2  
NAR

First Published

12222

ಬಿ.ಎ.ಯು. ಮೈಸೂರು
ಗ್ರಂಥ ಭಂಡಾರ
ಕ್ರಮ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ 1818
ವರ್ಗ
ವರ್ಗ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ
ಬರಹ ತಾ. 14-8-85
Price : Rs. 6-00
\$ 3

Published by

The Director, Prasaraṅga, Manasaṅgotri, Mysore-57001

Printed at

The University Printing Press, Mysore-570012.

TO

PRÉM NATH BAZAZ

*A Dear Friend & Daring Thinker*









## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

We are extremely happy to present the '*Poverty of Intellectualism in India*' to the public in the present form.

We are under a deep debt of gratitude to V R Narla who kindly accepted our invitation to deliver these lectures and permitted us to publish them in this form.

We are also grateful to the University Printing Press for the exquisite Printing.

PRABHU SHANKARA

*Director*







## CONTENTS

### LECTURE I

Poverty of Intellectualism in India, Ancient and Medieval Periods .. .. .	1
--	---

### LECTURE II

Poverty of Intellectualism in India, Modern Period ..	36
---	----









*Poverty of Intellectualism  
in India*

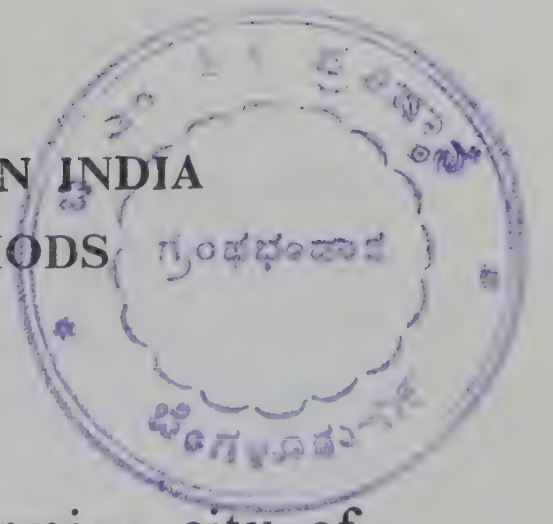




# POVERTY OF INTELLECTUALISM IN INDIA

## ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL PERIODS

### LECTURE I



This is my second visit to the charming city of Mysore, and I owe this as well as the first one in 1970 to the kindness and courtesy of the Mysore University. On the earlier occasion I was invited to present a paper to the Seminar on “Gandhiji in Indian Literature”, and now I am asked to deliver a couple of lectures on “Poverty of Intellectualism in India”. Your University has, thus, honoured me twice and I offer its authorities my sincere thanks. I am specially grateful to my good friend, Dr H. M. Nayak, Director of the Institute of Kannada Studies. Whether they are Kannada Studies, or some other studies, they should constitute a band of the broader spectrum of Indian Studies, indeed, of Humanistic Studies. “The proper study of mankind”, in the words of Pope, “is Man”. I know that Dr Nayak fully subscribes to this view and it is this which has endeared him to me from the first day we met eight years ago. Though I had not the pleasure of knowing Shri R. L. Anantharamaiah earlier, I should also express my gratefulness to him for, as Director-in-Charge of *Prasaranga*, it was he who, on Dr Nayak’s suggestion, actually invited me to speak on what I consider to be the greatest of our poverties, the poverty of intellectualism.

What is intellectualism? To indicate what it is and what it is not, I may say that while M. N. Roy

was an intellectual, M. K. Gandhi was not. Both had intellects, that is, both had the ability to perceive, to reason, to discriminate and to understand. And yet, rarely do we come across references to “soul” in Roy’s writings except in derisive terms. On the other hand, we find Gandhi speaking all the time about “soul” and “soul force”. It is not that he dismissed intellect altogether as a thing of no consequence, but he thought that intellect was secondary to soul, indeed it came a long way behind. “Great causes”, he warned, “cannot be served by intellectual equipment alone, they call for spiritual effort or soul-force.”<sup>1</sup> From the history of ancient India we can easily pick out typical counterparts to Roy and Gandhi; they are Uddālaka and Yājñavalkya.

Are Uddālaka and Yājñavalkya historical persons? On this point there is some doubt. “Of particular interest in the early Upanishads”, writes Dale Riepe, “are the possibly fictional characters, Uddālaka and Yājñavalkya, the first representing the earliest naturalistic (rational) point of view recorded in Indian literature and the latter the most important early idealistic view, to be ultimately consummated in the Vedānta philosophy. Even if Uddālaka is presumed a fictional character, yet he presents a naturalistic point of view that must have been stated by someone. Furthermore, this view-point is earlier than that of the Ajivikas, or of Carvaka or Lokāyata, usually called the first materialistic school, if not the only one, to appear in India. The date of Uddālaka is set at 640–610 B.C., which, if authenticated beyond a doubt would make him prior to Thales...Uddālaka broke



with the major cosmological and theogonic tradition before him in the Vedas and held a hylozoistic and perhaps even materialistic view of the world. It is recorded in the *Uddālaka Jātaka* that he maintained the view that 'If when a man knew a thousand Vedas and yet could not be free from misery, so long as he did not know the right path, my opinion is, that the Vedas are useless, the path of self-restraint is the truth.'<sup>2</sup>

"The great opponent of Uddālaka, the first famous idealistic philosopher of India", continues Riepe, "was Yājñavalkya. Yājñavalkya held that the Great Spirit in the universe is like a musical instrument, whereas the world of stuff is like a tone struck from it. Hence, nature, like a tone, is beyond our grasp or understanding."<sup>3</sup> What Yājñavalkya really means is that while the material world is unreal, a mere illusion, the soul which is pure consciousness and bliss, is the only reality. He is said to be a contemporary of King Janaka of Videha, and figures largely in the *Brhadāranyaka Upanishad*. He had two wives, Katyāni and Maitreyi. As a non-believer in the material world, he taught his idealist philosophy to Maitreyi, but as the material world refuses to be just wished away, he settled his immense wealth on Katyāyāni. That is a clever way of having the best of both the worlds!

From what I have said thus far, it is, I hope, quite clear that intellectualism has little to do with what is called the soul. In fact, intellectualism is often taken to be synonymous with rationalism. Of late, it is also being equated with humanism. May I request you to keep this point in mind? For I will



be using from now on intellectualism, rationalism and humanism as interchangeable terms.

Despite the primacy which a rationalist gives to reason as a means of acquiring knowledge, he does not wholly brush aside either will or feeling. Likewise, he does not rule out the senses. If he were to do that, he hardly deserves to be called a rationalist. To be free from dogmatism, to set his face firmly against fanaticism, are indeed two of the distinguishing marks of a rationalist. So, in the process of acquiring knowledge, in striving to arrive at truth, he should take into consideration the evidence furnished even by such agencies as will, feeling and senses, provided that evidence is not irrational. Subject to this condition, he should, I hold, take into account even intuition and revelation. For according to me, intuition is nothing but the sudden emergence of a truth submerged in the mind while revelation is reason in a flash. Now, another distinct characteristic of a rationalist is this: Even though he dislikes intensely the ideas, concepts or theories of others, he resists every attempt to silence them. A classical expression to this noble attitude was given by Voltaire. When Jean Jacques Rousseau published his *Social Contract*, Voltaire wrote privately to a friend saying that he was chagrined to notice Rousseau's passion for savagery attaining new heights in his latest book. "Ah, Monsieur", he said, "you see now that Jean Jacques resembles a philosopher as a monkey resembles a man." Going even a step further, he referred to Rousseau as "the dog of Diogenes gone mad." And yet, in a communication to Rousseau himself Voltaire declared:



‘I do not agree with a word that you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.’ In fact, he went even further. When Rousseau was forced to flee from his many enemies, he invited the fugitive to come and stay with him at Les Delices, his safe retreat near Geneva.<sup>4</sup>

Unlike rationalists, their opponents are generally intolerant, sometimes even fanatical and murderous. The reason for this is perfectly obvious. When you cannot meet a sound argument with a counter-argument you will naturally be prone to cover up your awkwardness by losing your temper, and in extreme cases, by resorting to physical violence. By whatever name they may go, be it idealists, intuitionists, romanticists, skeptics, positivists or pragmatists, opponents of rationalists almost invariably find it impossible to make a dent in the armour of rationalists. Hence, they try to ridicule and revile the rationalists, to deride and destroy them. As in many other nations, this has happened in India, too, and it has happened here on a wider scale, and more ruthlessly, than anywhere else.

There is a general and erroneous impression that the Indian systems of philosophy are six in all. This impression got strengthened by Max Muller’s treatise on *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*.<sup>5</sup> According to it, the six systems are: Vedānta or Uttara-Mimāmsa, Pūrva-Mimāmsa, Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Nyāya and Vaisheshika. In reality, of these six, Pūrva Mimāmsa is nothing but the exegesis of the karma-kāṇḍa (ritualistic) portions of the Brāhmanās. In other words, it is a practical handbook by Jaimini,



an expert priest, to help apprentices to priestcraft. Max Mullar himself admits this by saying that “there is little room for philosophy” in Jaimini’s Pūrva-Mimāmsa.<sup>6</sup> Paul Deussen and R. Garbe are even more explicit on this point.<sup>7</sup>

If Jaimini’s Pūrva-Mimāsa is a practical handbook to priests, Patanjali’s Yoga is a manual to those who hanker after certain psycho-physical experience. I know that just now Yoga is having an international vogue. Yoga Institutes are being increasingly established both in India and abroad and run by “jet-set” yoga teachers on a grand scale. At present Yoga is undoubtedly “a big business”, posing as the only answer to all the maladies of modern man. But in the olden times there were authorities who questioned its claim to be a philosophy. Kumārila, the founder of the Bhāṭṭa school of Mimāmsa philosophy, has, for instance, clearly stated that yoga-experience is “at best a subjective fancy and therefore as good or as bad as any other subjective fancy.”<sup>8</sup> Even Max Muller is of two minds whether he could strictly call it a school of philosophy. At one point in his *Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, he says: “Yoga is indeed, as the Brahmans say, Sāṅkhya, only modified, particularly in one point, namely, in its attempt to develop and systematise an ascetic discipline by which concentration of thought could be attained, and by admitting devotion to the Lord God as part of that discipline. Whether this was done, as is generally supposed, from more theological diplomacy is a question we should find difficult to answer, considering how little we know of the



personal character of Patanjali or of the circumstances under which he elaborated his theistic Sāmkhya philosophy.”<sup>9</sup> Radhakrishnan, in accordance with his usual practice, contents himself by telling us what Patanjali thought of his system. “Yoga, according to Patanjali”, he writes “is a methodical effort to attain perfection, through the control of the different elements of human nature, physical and psychical. The physical body, the active will and the understanding mind are to be brought under control. Patanjali insists on certain practices which are intended to cure the body of its restlessness and free it from its impurities. When we secure through these practices increased vitality, prolonged youth and longevity, these are to be employed in the interests of spiritual freedom.”<sup>10</sup> Whether Yoga can be employed “in the interests of spiritual freedom” or not, one thing is certain. As Patanjali himself has clarified, the discipline of Yoga is meant to still the *Chitta* (mind). When he was younger and was not hesitant to call a spade, K. S. Murty said, “The object of Yoga is to murder all thought.”

Stilling the mind and murdering all thought is not going up the ladder of evolution by one step but coming down by perhaps a dozen steps. Indeed, it is to renounce the prerogative of being man. Sophocles, one of the greatest playwrights of ancient Greece says :

Wonders are many, but none,  
none is more wondrous than man

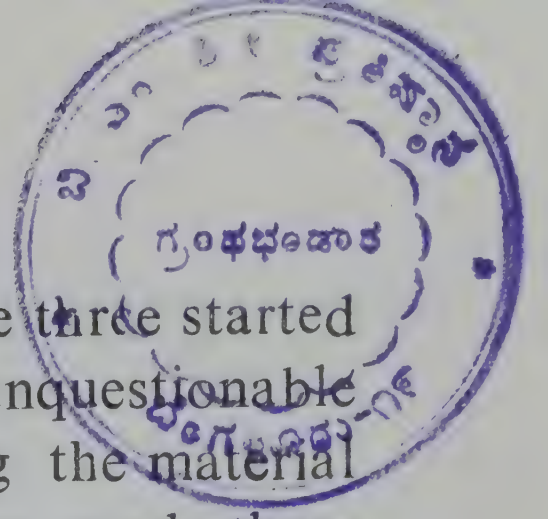
What makes man so wondrous is his mind! “We”,



in the words of Gilbert Highet, “are *Homo sapiens* Man the Thinker.” It is our power of thinking, especially conceptual thinking, which has differentiated us from all other animals. Indeed, the history of man is the history of his mind, of his thought. “History as a record of struggles for power” writes Highet, “is exciting but unrewarding. Dinosaurs tore at one another for ages: some survived; some died: it is all meaningless. Tribes of human beings have been hunting and rending and enslaving one another for many centuries. This one had the longer claws, that had the stouter muscles, another hid in ambush. It is factual, but is it important? Does it even explain the spread of mankind over the face of the planet, or is it merely a side activity? No: surely our real, our essential history is the story of our learning and thinking. It was by learning that we ceased to be animals and made ourselves into men. That was the first stage. It was then, far back in the warm jungles, that somehow, cell by cell and reflex by reflex, the wonderful human brain was formed, and with it our two other human powers—the devices by which, even if the world fell into ruins, we could still rebuild it—our fantastically intricate speech, and our ingenious adaptable hands.”<sup>11</sup> To practice yoga and to yearn for the supposed spiritual freedom it confers by murdering the mind is a colossal folly.

Now, to return to the Indian systems of philosophy. When Pūrva-Mimāmsa and Yoga are eliminated from Max Muller’s list, we are left with Vedānta, Sāṅkhya, Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika. Of these, Vedānta is aggressively idealistic, while the rest have a





tilt towards materialism. In fact, all the three started by the denial of God, by denial of the unquestionable authority of the Veda, and by accepting the material basis for creation, but fear of persecution made them resort to subterfuges so as to pass off as non-materialistic, even as theistic, systems of thought.

To affirm, as it is often done, that among the religions of the world Hinduism is singularly tolerant is to fly in the face of facts. P. C. Ray, an eminent scientist of an earlier generation, was, I hold, right when he said : “Hinduism is only tolerant and catholic in mere empty words. In actual life, it is rigid, cruel and repulsive.”<sup>12</sup> How “rigid, cruel and repulsive” it could be is borne out by the murder of Vena, by the beheading of Sambuka and the lynching of Chārvāka. Their only crime was to question the truth of the Veda and the efficacy of the Vedic sacrifices. If these three instances are dismissed as not historical but only mythological—this is a favourite trick to which the defenders of Hinduism resort when it suits their purpose—there are other clear historical instances to show with what violence non-Vedic faiths and their patrons were put down. To select a few at random, Brihadradha, a descendent of Asoka, was assassinated by his commander-in-chief, Pushyamitra, and the usurper of the Mauryan throne started his reign by reviving the *Asvamedha* (Horse Sacrifice) to which a stop was put by Asoka.<sup>13</sup> Another Buddhist Emperor, Kanishka, was “smothered.....in bed with his own quilt.”<sup>14</sup> The Chalukyan Emperor, Pulakesin I, “destroyed the monastery at Amarāvati and abolished Buddhism in those parts.”<sup>15</sup> Nāgārjunakonda, too,



presumably fell into ruins on account of vandalism carried out under the direct supervision of no less a person than the Adi Sankarāchārya. "Local tradition", reports Longhurst who was the very first to carry out excavations at the site, "relates that the great Hindu philosopher and teacher Sankarāchārya of mediaeval times come to Nagārjunakonda with a host of followers and destroyed the Buddhist monuments. Be this as it may, the fact remains that the cultivated lands in the valley on which the ruined buildings stand represent a religious grant made to Sankarāchārya, and it was only with the sanction of the present Religious Head of the followers of this great teacher that I was able to conduct the excavations. This same Brāhman Pontiff, who resides at Pushpagiri in the Guntur District, also owns the Srisailam temple in the Nallamalais, which no doubt was acquired in the same manner as it seems to have been a Buddhist site originally."<sup>16</sup>

The Vedantists ruthlessly suppressed not only the Buddhists but many others. Among the Buddha's and Māhavira's contemporaries there were literally hundreds of wandering teachers. They had their own schools of thought, some major, some minor, but all of them heterodox.<sup>17</sup> Among these rebel teachers, the more prominent, as Riepe mentions, were: Makkhali Gosala, Pūrana Kassapa, Ajita Kesakambalī, Pakudha Kaccāyana, Sanjaya Belatthiputta and Nigantha Nātaputta.<sup>18</sup> From the Buddhist and Jain canons, we get glimpses of these masters. According to tradition, Lokāyata was the oldest and the boldest school of materialism in India and its founder was Brihaspati.



He condemned, it is said, the idealists as “men devoid of intellect and manliness, who uphold the authority of the Vedas because they yield them the means of a comfortable livelihood.”<sup>19</sup> The Lokāyatās are also referred to as the Chārvākas. “Chārvāka is met with”, says D. Shastri, “in the Mahābhārata. Later on, this is the only term by which Indian materialism is designated. The word chārvāka is often taken as charu (beautiful) and vāka (speech). And it is interesting to find that charu is also a synonym for Brhaspati. Thus it may be suggested that chārvāka stands for ‘the word of Brhaspati.’”<sup>20</sup> One may doubt whether Chāru was another name for Brhaspati, but what is beyond doubt is this: Seeing how mercilessly the materialists and other heretics (pāshandās) were being suppressed, the propounders of the Sāṅkhya, Nyāya and Vaisheshika schools smuggled God into their parlours through the back door !

I do not propose to argue here about the relative merits of idealism and materialism, though personally I belong to the latter school. The point I want to stress is that the claim that Hinduism had given full and free scope to every school of thought, including the most heterodox, is false. To be sure, there was some eclecticism and some syncretism. These two processes are still favoured, but only on condition that no basic orthodox tenet is questioned. The first and foremost of these tenets is the acceptance of the authority of the Vedas as the repositories of divine truths ; the second that Vedānta is such a true and superb philosophy that all others, be they Indian or foreign, are not a patch on it; the third that the material



world is an illusion, and the only reality is the soul; the fourth that we should constantly strive to break out from the cycle of birth and death so that the individual soul could merge into the Supreme Soul; the fifth that inequality is a law of nature, for your good and evil karma in your past lives is the decisive factor in determining your present station in society, your happiness or suffering, indeed, every single little and big thing about you; the sixth that to try to change or even to disturb the old and righteous social order based on what is called the *Varnāshrama dharma* is to invite the blowing up of the universe; the seventh—well, as I have to stop this list at some point, I may as well do it here. The most queer thing about practically all of these tenets is that none of them finds sanction in the oldest of scriptures, the Rig Veda.

Quite contrary to what the Vedantists want us to believe, the Rig Veda is more concerned with life on earth than in heaven. “In fact”, as K. S. Murty points out, “there is no hymn addressed to *Dyaus* (heaven, sky) alone; it is addressed always along with the earth. Renunciation and release (*moksa*) are not mentioned in Rig Veda. There is, of course, no theory of transmigration in the Veda, unless one likes to see it implied by a hymn addressed to the departed ancestors: ‘Go thither, and come back to the home free from blemishes’...The Rg Veda does not mention any hell. It mentions heaven (*svarga*) only once or twice,”<sup>21</sup> C. Kunhan Raja is even more frank. “In the Veda”, he states, “the rituals were performed for happiness in life and not in afterlife...In the Veda there



is no distinction between matter and spirit. There is only the world which is a unity...Man and his life and enjoyments in the world became the chief subjects of the *Rig Veda*, and that is what we find in it...Social life was not confined to wedlock. They ate and drank; they ate animal food and they drank alcohol. They even ate beef.” Making an attempt to sum up the life and thought and culture of the Rig Vedic people, Kunhan Raja says : “ If anyone asks me the question, ‘ What do you consider to be the essence of Vedic culture ’, my reply is ‘ A happy life in a beautiful world.’”<sup>22</sup>

Given their socio-economic background, this is just the kind of *Weltanschauung* (a general philosophical view of the world) which the Vedic Aryans could have formulated for themselves. When they entered India through the North-Western land routes, probably in successive waves, they were (to use a favourite expression of that pioneering anthropologist, E. B. Taylor) “ a rude people”. Before their entry into India they had not seen a city. They were a semi-pastoral people, moving with their herds from pasture to pasture. It can be safely presumed that the urban civilization of Harappa bewildered them. They were convinced that the cities which dominated the lush plains of the Punjab were the creation of some evil spirit. And so, they destroyed all cities (in their parlance they were “purs”) and one of their many laudatory names for Indra, their principal god and warlord, was “Purandar”, the destroyer of cities. They were no less convinced that the criss-crossing dams on the Sind and its many tributaries were



demons in the shape of serpents, blocking the free flow of waters in the rivers. And so they smashed the dams and they hailed their Indra as *vritrahan*, the slayer of the serpent-demon,<sup>23</sup> Apart from their physical prowess, they had other advantages which made them invincible. They fought from horse-drawn chariots and they fought with powerful bows and arrows. To the Harappans, they should have looked like the *panzer* divisions of Hitler. They had also a new weapon of war called “*vajrāyudha*”. According to some archæologists, this was a battle axe with a shaft hole. In spite of their invincibility, they had one major disadvantage; they were greatly outnumbered by the people at whose cost they wanted to gain *lebensraum* (living space). The mental uneasiness which this disadvantage caused made them, in the first place, ruthless in war, and secondly, to pray to their gods for protection. Their ruthlessness was such that they spared neither women nor children, indeed, they thanked Indra for entering the womb of the woman of enemy tribes to destroy the foetus. And they prayed to all their known and even unknown gods, prayed to them morning, noon and evening, and sought their protection from the hostile people among whom they felt like a small island in a vast ocean. The Rig Veda is largely a compilation of their war songs and their prayer songs. Like all virile and primitive people, they could easily burst into song, and the Rig Veda does contain some excellent poetry. Poetry at its best is sure to have, besides amazing flights of imagination, some uncanny insights, some subtle intimations of universal truths. These features



do lend certain distinction to the Rig Veda, but to claim on its behalf that an omniscient, God had spoken through it is to take leave of one's senses. Along with some pure gold, there is much dross in the Rig Veda. When I say "pure gold", what I have in mind is the Rig Vedic poetry, and certainly not the Rig Vedic philosophy.

The composers of the Rig Veda were too rude to be keen thinkers or systematic philosophers. Indeed, they were so simple-minded that the author of a hymn wonders how white milk is yielded by a black or brown cow. Their ideas of creation and of the Creator do not show any greater acuteness of mind. At one stage Varuna, Indra and Agni are said to be the joint authors of the universe. Later on the credit is given to Hiranyagarbha, the God with the golden womb. Then we find Visvakarman and Prajapati jostling each other to claim the honour. Nor is there any unanimity about the process of creation. One view is that it was fashioned out of wood as a carpenter builds a house. But which was the tree that supplied the wood? Well, Brahman was the wood. Another view is that Hiranyagarbha, the God with the Golden Womb, arose from the great water that pervaded the world and he created the world out of a shapeless chaos. A third view is that the creation was the outcome of the inter-action of *purusha* and *prakriti*. A fourth is that Visvakarma, the first born of the universe, constructed it like a master architect. Lastly, there is the hymn which begins with the profound statement: "There was then neither what is nor what is not", etc. To a rational mind it does not



make much sense. Even so, Radhakrishnan says : “We find in this hymn a representation of the most advanced theory of creation.” Advanced on what? Surely, not on Eudoxus and Ptolemy, nor on Āryabhatta and Varāhamihira, nor on Copernicus and Kepler?

What is, therefore, admirable in the Rig Vedic Aryans is not their profundity of knowledge or the high standard of their morals, but their boundless zest for life. They were good eaters and good boozers. They delighted in sex. They were fond of horse races and of gambling, too. They loved poetry and music, they loved dance and drama. Dawn, “the daughter of heaven”, thrilled them; the sight of fluffy, rain-laden clouds enchanted them. They admired not age, but youth; they wanted to live for one hundred years savouring every pleasure which this beautiful and bounteous earth of ours could offer. For assuring for themselves a full and affluent life, they fought wars. They pillaged and plundered. They enslaved their prisoners of war. But among themselves they knew no class or caste. A member of the community who was obviously indigent prays thus : “Behold, I am a composer of hymns, my father is a physician, my mother grinds corn on stone. We are all engaged in different occupations. As cows wander (in various directions) in the pasture-fields for food, so we (in various occupations) worship thee, O Soma! for wealth. Flow thou for Indra!” If hereditary caste system based on one’s occupation existed at the time, surely the father could not have been a physician, the mother a corn-grinder, and the son a composer



of hymns ! By the way, composing of hymns was a profession at the time, and some hymn-writers received far better payments than the popular composers of film songs are now getting !

I know that those who maintain that Brahma himself originated the four principal castes quote the “Purusha Sūkta”, a hymn from the tenth and the last “Mandala” (Book) of the Rig Veda, in support of their contention. But Vedic scholars (of course, only those with an open mind) are agreed that it is a late interpolation ! True, such words as *varna*, *kshatriya*, *vipra* and *Brahmana* are met with frequently in the Rig Veda. But as R. C. Dutt explains : “The very word *varna*, which in later Sanscrit indicates caste, is used in the Rig Veda to distinguish the Aryans and the non-Aryans, and nowhere indicates separate sections in the Aryan community. The very word *Kshatriya*, which in later Sanscrit means the military caste, is used in the Veda simply as an adjective which means strong, and is applied to gods. The very word *Vipra*, which in later Sanscrit means the priestly caste, is used in the Rig Veda merely as an adjective which means wise, and which is applied to gods. And the very word *Brahmana*, which in later Sanscrit means also the priestly caste, is used in a hundred places in the Rig Veda to imply the composers of hymns, and nothing else.”<sup>24</sup>

May I in this context make a point omitted by Dutt ? To the Aryans, the Rig Vedic period was still a period of conquest, of expansion, of colonization. Their slogan was “*Charaiveti !*” (“March on ! March on !”) So there was not enough time for classes or

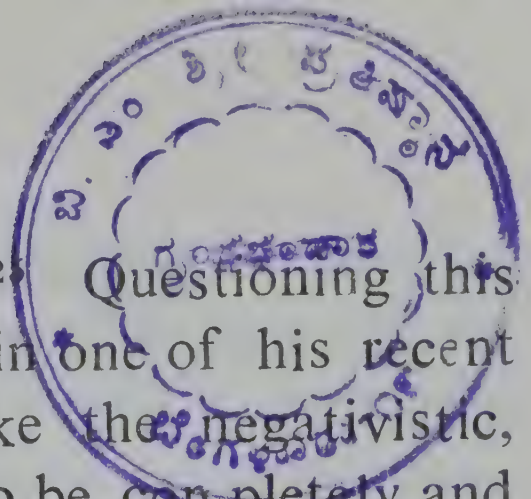


castes to appear, and in case they started to appear, to become solidified. In a way, it was a period when, if they failed to hang together, they had to hang separately. No wonder, the note on which the Rig Veda ends is one of unity. In ringing and reverberating tones, it exhorts the people: "Meet together, talk together, let your minds apprehend together..... Common be the prayers, common be the acquirements, common be the purpose, associated be the desire..... Common be your intention, common be the wishes of your hearts, common be your thoughts, so that there may be thorough union among you."

Whether you agree with me or not in what I have been saying about the Rig Vedic people, you will, I hope, not quarrel with me in holding that they were in love with life. They did not want, much less did they crave for, release (*moksha*) from life. It may surprise some people that to them Yama was not the god of hell, but the god of the heaven of the righteous, the god who rewards all good men after their death, in his realm which is not a place of torture but a happy land. And so I am, I believe, on firm ground when I affirm that the philosophy of the Rig Vedic people, if their rude and simple *Weltanschauung* (world-view) could at all be called a philosophy, was a world and life affirmation philosophy, that is, a philosophy which believed this world to be real and not an illusion, and a philosophy which did not consider life to be full of sorrows and suffering.

But slowly all this changed and a *Weltanschauung* of world and life negation took its place. Albert Schweitzer thinks that the Indian thought had always





tended towards such a negation.<sup>25</sup> Questioning this opinion, K. S. Murty maintains in one of his recent books that “it is foolish to take the negativistic, other-worldly literature of India to be completely and exclusively representative of its ethos.....”<sup>26</sup> For my part, I differ from both. As I have tried to show the Rig Vedic people were aggressive in their love of the world, aggressive in their love of life. But slowly there came over a change in their attitude both towards the world and towards life in the world, and this is clearly reflected in the two of the oldest Upanishads, Brhadāranyaka and Chāndogya. Roughly five centuries separate the Rig Veda and the first Upanishads. Within this half a millennium the Aryans had occupied the Sind and Gangetic valleys almost completely. Of the conquered people, the more tractable were absorbed into the social matrix as Sudras, the less tractable were relegated to the fringe of society as Chandālās (Untouchables), while those who flatly refused to accept the Aryan hegemony were driven either into the confines of mountain ranges or into the wilderness of forests. In other words, the age of conquest was left far behind, and a fairly good advance was made into the age of consolidation. This meant radical changes not only in the political scene but also in the socio-economic set-up. Tribal republics, barring a few exceptions in the outlying areas, were welded into small kingdoms, visions of a big empire began to tantalize the more ambitious among the kings. Forests were cleared, swamps were drained, and agriculture took precedence over cattle-breeding. These political and socio-economic changes led to the



emergence of castes. To provide the labour force for the new economy, there was no need to enforce bond-slavery on a large scale as in the rest of the ancient world. For the Sudrās and the Chandālās were there to serve the upper castes, and together they constituted seventy to eighty per cent of the total population. To supplement their services, a few bond-slaves could also be had either as part of a marriage settlement or in lieu of an unpaid debt.

In a society which condemns an overwhelming majority of its members to social degradation, to near hunger, and subjects them to many other indignities and iniquities, the principle of world and life negation is sure to gain ground. And this is exactly what happened between the Rig Vedic and the Upanishadic ages. The upper castes had the big battalions on their side. They also had all the organs of political power at their command. But political power, backed when necessary by armed might, is not enough to keep the masses in strict check. Control has to be gained over their mind, and they should be made to resign themselves to their lot. If they could also be made to believe that they have to blame themselves for their low status, their hard lot, the power and privileges of the ruling elite would be a thousand times more secure. It may be truly said that the upper castes of India, especially its kings and priests, could have given quite a few good lessons to Stalin and Mao in brain-washing.

As I had pointed out earlier, there is no reference to rebirth in the Rig Veda. It was a later concoction. "Discussion of the idea of rebirth", as W. Norman Brown states, "appears first in an account found in



two of the oldest Upanishads, and it is taught not by a member of the priestly group, a Brahman, but by a Kshatriya, a member of the warrior, or ruling, class.”<sup>27</sup> The name of the Kshatriya prince was Pravāhana Jaibali. For his concoction, he might have received inspiration from the Mundās, the Santāls and other tribal people among whom a belief in the transmigration of souls prevailed. “The belief”, writes A. E. Gough, “in the passage of the soul into trees, and animals, and fresh human bodies having no place in Vedic literature prior to the Upanishads, it is reasonable to suppose the Hindus to have taken it from the indigenes, in the course of their absorption of indigenous blood.”<sup>28</sup> Anyway, right on the heels of the Prince Pravāhana, come two priests to cook up the idea of karma. The Brhadāranyaka gives us a full account of the actual process of cooking. When King Janaka of Videha offered a reward of 1000 cows together with ten *padās* of gold tied to the horns of each animal, to anyone who explained to him the nature of the Brahman, Yājñavalkya stood up boldly from the midst of the large assembly of priests, and commanded his disciples to drive the cows to his *ashram*. Enraged by what he thought was Yājñavalkya’s impudence, Jāratkāra Ārtabhāga challenged him to a debate. Thereupon Yājñavalkya said: “Ārtabhāga, my dear, take my hand. (I am quoting from R. E. Hume’s *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*.) We two only will know of this. This is not for us two (to speak of) in public.” The two went away for secret deliberation. When they returned “what they said was *karma* (action). What they praised was



*karma*. Verily, one becomes good by good action, bad by bad action. Thereupon Jāratkārava Ārtabhāga held his peace.’’<sup>29</sup> That is how *karma* was cooked up in secret and ever since the time it happened nearly three thousand years ago, like Jāratkārava, we too are holding our peace. Yājñavalkya might have arrived at some private understanding with Jāratkārava for the latter to observe peace, but why should we give up our prerogative to question the correctness of the postulates of karma and rebirth.

Though totally baseless, the postulates of karma and rebirth have become the very basis of Hindu life and thought. They are no longer in the crude state in which Prince Pravāhana and Priest Yājñavalkya had originally advanced them; with the addition of many nuances, subtleties and refinements, they have combined to form into a well-regulated and strongly entrenched ideology. Such indeed was the power of the ideology that neither Gotama the Buddha nor Mahāvira could escape its vicious tentacles. Buddha saw no need for the concept of God, and so did Mahāvira. Buddha denied even the soul while Mahāvira neither accepted it nor rejected it in toto. And yet, both believed in karma as well as rebirth. Of course, a lot of hair-splitting is done to explain away this glaring inconsistency in the idea-systems of Buddha and Mahāvira. Owing to this very contradiction, I am convinced, Hinduism could ultimately score over Buddhism and Jainism. Some other heretical schools like those of the Ajivakās also believed in karma. I fully agree with Riepe’s statement that “probably from the time of the Ajivakās to the present



it was thought more odd and dangerous in India to reject karma than to reject the existence of the gods, at least until the supremacy of the Moguls with their insistence upon belief in Allah.”

We can understand why the rejection of God is not considered by Hinduism an unpardonable heresy as it is by Islam, Christianity and some other religions. God or no God, the supremacy of the ruling elite can be completely safe as long as belief in karma, and its corollary, the belief in rebirth, have their iron grip on people's mind. There is no social injustice, including untouchability, the most heinous of crimes against fellow human beings, that cannot be justified as a law of nature on the basis of karma and rebirth. The law of causality is undoubtedly a natural law. But to maintain, as the proponents of the karma theory do that death is no barrier to the operation of the law of causality, and that the good or evil effects of what you do or fail to do in one birth follow you into your next birth is a big lie. Once this big lie is established as a self-evident truth—and this is exactly what has been achieved—you can affirm as K. V. Rangaswami Aiyangar did, that “inequality, not equality is what is found in nature.” As he was in his day a forcible spokesman of the traditional school of thought, I would like to present to you a few passages from his Lucknow University Lectures delivered in 1946. I quote :

“The concept of equality is a deduction not from facts but from aspiration or supposed needs. Enforcement of equality will be putting every one in a Procrustean bed. No two persons are exactly equal



to each other, physically, mentally and spiritually. The sexes have different functions, often different psychological traits, and differences of physical strength and constitution.....Men and women do not start with the same initial equipment in strength or intelligence. Men are not placed, all in the same conditions, to make a universal rule applicable to them all. Conditions change, and require re-adjustments to suit them .....In spite of the slogan of equality of every one before the law, differentiation has to be made on one ground or another. Even as an ideal in the administration of justice, equality can work wrong.....The classification into *varnas* is explained on the basis, not only of functions to be discharged, but of initial psychic differentiation. It is founded on the differences of temperament of psychic drift, known as *guna*. The scale of *gunas* may be likened to that of scales of personal development. The fourth *varna* is placed as in the scale, as it represents the *karmic* consequences of *tāmasaguna* in previous births...In the scheme of society envisaged in *Manusmṛti*, equality, in a civil sense, is treated as a myth. There is no equality in status and emoluments. Human needs, no less than human powers, emphasize inequality. The recognition of the fact is essential to advancement of the individual (self) and the group.”<sup>31</sup> All this is arrant nonsense. But then as Bertrand Russell rightly says, “There is no nonsense so arrant that it cannot be made the creed of the vast majority by adequate governmental action. Plato intended his Republic to be founded on a myth which he admitted to be absurd, but he was rightly confident that the



populace could be induced to believe it.”<sup>23</sup> What is even worse is that we suffer from a self-induced delusion that we have a mission to fulfil and that mission is to rescue the world from its growing spirit of materialism! I wish we could have a bold and original thinker like Bertrand Russell to write from the Indian point of view “An Outline of Intellectual Rubbish”. (It is a big chapter in his book *Unpopular Essays*) As Russells appear but rarely I will be pleased even if we could have an author like Bergen Evans who could write for us a book on the lines of his *Natural History of Nonsense*.<sup>33</sup> Meanwhile, I am very happy indeed that Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya is turning out some excellent work on Indian Materialism. He is throwing fresh light on many dark corners of Indian thought; he is showing up with rare courage the low levels to which our Vedantists could stoop to serve their own ends. I wonder whether you have in Kannada an equivalent to our Telugu proverb which says: “Vedantists are coming, keep an eye on your pots and pans!”

Please pardon me for this slight digression; I have made it with a specific purpose. Not so long ago Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya lectured in your University on *Two Trends In Indian Philosophy*.<sup>34</sup> In the course of his lectures, he laid bare the hollowness of the logic of the idealists. He revealed the tricky nature of their play with such phrases as *samvriti satya* (empirical truth) and *paramarthikasatya* (transcendental truth). He exposed the unscrupulousness of Nāgārjuna and other Mahāyānists who were guilty of forging some scriptures to justify the wrong twist



they sought to give to the original teachings of the Buddha. He has also spoken at length on how the exponents of the three principal schools of materialism, Lokāyata, Sāṅkhya and Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, had to pose as theists to protect themselves from persecution. I will be wasting my time and yours if I were to cover the same ground over again. I will, therefore, try to deal with two or three points left untouched by Chattopadhyaya.

It was not only Nāgārjuna and his colleagues who forged scriptures ; such forgery has been almost a national tradition with us. The hotch-potch of Sāṅkhya, Yoga and Bhakti, apart from lessons on ethics and dietetics, which we find in the Bhagavad Gita can only be explained on the assumption that it contains a large number of interpolations. Indeed, according to Rudolf Otto, a German scholar who gave many years of his life to a critical study of the Gita, its original text consisted of 73 *slokās* only.<sup>35</sup> The Mahābhārata, of which the Gita is a part, was likewise tampered with over the centuries. Initially, it had no more than 8800 *slokās*, and was called “Jaya”. In course of time, new material was added and a second edition was issued with 24,000 verses, and at the same time the title was changed from “Jaya” to “Bhārata.” And what we now have as “Mahābhārata” has 96,836 verses. (Different regional recensions differ slightly in this total).<sup>36</sup> We do not know exactly when the process of enlargement started, but it continued right down to the 4th century A.D.<sup>37</sup> In the case of Rāmāyana, too, interpolators were active for at least five centuries. Along with additions,



ommissions, alterations and emendations were made extensively. The objective of all this tampering with the original texts was to fight back Buddhism, Jainism and other heretical religions which refused to accept the divine nature of the Vedas, the efficacy of the Vedic sacrifices or the tall claims of the Vedic priests to be “gods on earth”. If the Rāmāyana has any historical basis, Rāma should have preceded Gotama the Buddha by some centuries. And yet, Rāma is made to abuse the Buddha as “a thief”. Speaking of the enlargement of the Gita, Otto says that the attempt shows “an unmistakable propensity to Brahmanize the original text”.<sup>38</sup> This applies to the Mahābhārata as a whole.

Gotama the Buddha and Mahāvira were Kshatriyās, and they put their own caste a rung higher than the Brahmin caste. To regain their lost position and prestige, the Brahmins rewrote practically the whole of their literature with the possible exception of the four Vedas and the major Upanishads! Through the mouth of Bhishma, a Kshatriya, the redactors of the Mahābhārata tell Yudhishthara, another kshatriya, that the highest duty of a king is to worship the Brahmins. And here is the exact passage embedded in the Anusāsanika Parva of the Mahābhārata: “The highest duty of a crowned king is to worship learned Brahmans; they should be protected as one protects oneself or one’s children; and be respected, bowed to and revered as if they were one’s parents. If Brahmans are contented, the whole country prospers; if they are discontented and angry, everything goes to destruction. They can make a god not a god, and a not-god,



a god. One whom they praise prospers ; one whom they reproach, becomes miserable. The different Kshatriya tribes , Sakas, Yavanas, and Kāmbojas, became Sūdras through not seeing or following Brahmins ".<sup>39</sup> There is no parallel in world history for such a large scale literary fraud. What shocks you is not merely the magnitude of the fraud but the cold and cruel cynicism with which it was often perpetrated ! At times even a slight change in the spelling of a word in a scripture can result in the loss of thousands of lives. The word *Agre* in a hymn in the Rig Veda was, for example, altered to *Agne* by some wretched priests to justify the shocking custom of the burning of a widow along with the corpse of her husband. "This is perhaps the most flagrant instance", says Max Muller, "of what can be done by an unscrupulous priesthood. Here have thousands of lives been sacrificed...on the authority of a passage which was mangled, mistranslated and misapplied " <sup>40</sup>.

Yet another crime from an intellectual's point of view is the concoction of a corpus of mythologies called the Purānās. They too were intended to fight back the heretical religions in general, and Buddhism in particular. Neither in the Veda nor in the Upanishads there is the concept of a personal deity. Though Buddha's teaching has no place for God, the Mahāyānists raised the Buddha himself to the level of a God, and a personal God at that. This was a departure from the soma-imbuing gods of the Vedas and the nameless, formless, indefinable god of the Upanishads. And so, the Mahāyāna school of Buddhism started to attract to itself millions of



common men and women. In a desperate bid to arrest this powerful trend, the Vedic priests and the Upanishadic sophists formulated the "avatāra" theory. According to it, god descends to earth to restore righteousness whenever it is facing dire threat of extinction by the upsurge of evil forces. And thus arose the theory of avatāra (descent), and its corollary, *bhakti* (devotion to a personal god).

Both the Epics (the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyana) and all the thirty-six Purānās, major and minor, were meant exclusively for the *Sudrā* caste, that is, for the major portion of the population which was precluded from access to the Vedic literature. It was indeed a grave crime on the part of a *Sūdrā* to go anywhere near a Veda. According to Gotama, one of the old law-givers, if a *sūdra* listened to the recitation of the Veda, his ears should be stopped with molten lac or tin; if he recited the Veda, his tongue should be cut out; and if he remembered what he read, his body should be split into twain.<sup>41</sup> A more monstrous fiat can hardly be imagined. However, the point I want to make is this: There is only one Zend-Avesta to all Parsis, one Dhammapāda to all Buddhists, one Talmud to all Jews, one Bible to all Christians, one Korān to all Muslims, and even in those cases where a religion has a multiplicity of scriptures, no follower of that religion is prohibited from reading any of them. Among all world religions, Hinduism alone thought it proper to have two sets of religious books, the Vedas for the upper castes, and the Epics and the Puranas for the *Sūdrās*! (Perhaps as a sop to the *Sūdrā* ego, the Mahābhārata



is called the Fifth Veda). It had all started with two kinds of truth postulated by the Vedantists. Following their example, the priests made provision for two sets of scriptures and two sets of religious rituals. The law-givers, in their turn, fixed, for the same offence, different kinds of punishment to offenders belonging to different castes. If a Brahmin, for instance, abused a Sūdrā, he would go scot-free ; for the same offence, the tongue of a Sūdrā would be cut out. When such were the double standards which were observed for ages, and are not given up wholly even now, need we wonder why there is so much double-think and double-talk and double-dealing in our national life ?

Though the Purānās, in the words of M.M. Kunte, “constitute the special literature of Sūdrās”<sup>42</sup>, that literature gained such a grip over the popular mind that its fabricators ultimately fell victims to their own fabrication. Pushing the Vedās and their sacrifices as well as the Upanishads and their sophistry into the background, the bhakti of the Purānās became an all-powerful force. And for well over fifteen hundred years it is doing terrible harm to the nation. This is not to deny that for a time it held out some promise of bringing about social change. Ramanand, Kabir, Dadu, Basava Vemana, Garibdas, Chaitanya and a host of others were all against caste distinctions, they were also against untouchability. Further as D. P. Mukerji points out, “The majority of the medieval saints in India were non-Brahmins when they were non-Hindus like Kabir, Dadu and Rajjab.”<sup>43</sup> And so, many of them preached not only against caste differences but also against religious animosities.



But at the end the result of their labours was only to add a few more sects and sub-sects to the already much splintered matrix of the Indian society.

There is, according to me, yet another harm done by the bhakti movement. I fully agree with D. P. Mukerji when he says that bhakti movement "from many points of view...was an anti-intellectual movement." I cannot, however, go wholly with him when he goes on to add that the medieval saints released "the Indian spirit for a fresh spurt of creative activity in the sphere of emotional disciplines".<sup>44</sup> I do not deny that we owe some of our best literature in all our major languages to the bhakti cult. But what it leads to is not "emotional disciplines", but emotional imbalances. As Mukerji himself admits, the movement was "anti-intellectual" and what is "anti-intellectual" is sure to produce, at best, emotional exuberance, and at worst, emotional imbalances.

There is one more aspect of the bhakti movement which I greatly dislike. It tells you that your easiest and the surest way to salvation is to surrender yourself utterly to your personal god. If you could, in fact, conceive your god as your lord and yourself as his lovelorn bride, you are sure to attain the highest mystical bliss and also your release from the vicious cycle of birth and death. This has certainly tended to make men rather soft, even effeminate. Chaitanya and the Oriya poets who were influenced by him, says Mayadhar Mansinha, "are responsible in no small measure for the rapid decline of an independent State (Kalinga) that had successfully resisted alien invasion



for three centuries.”<sup>45</sup> What Mansinha says is true not only of Kalinga but of other parts of India where the bhakti cult has struck deep root.

Between them, the ancient and medieval periods of Indian history cover a minimum of five thousand years, and in my survey of the intellectual life of the people during that long stretch of time all that I could do is to skim over its surface. I am fully aware that my survey is sharply critical, perhaps highly unconventional too. This does not, however, mean that I am ignorant of the intellectual, artistic, scientific and technical achievements during the two periods I have covered. We can be proud of the anonymous mathematical genius who invented the zero, and as its corollary, assigned positional value to numerals. We can be no less proud of our contributions to algebra, geometry, trigonometry, kinetics, astronomy, physics, chemistry, physiology, medicine and some other branches of study. Without making fantastic claim that our ancients were manufacturing aeroplanes, that they had mastered the atomic science, and that many of the so-called modern scientific discoveries and inventions were, in fact, based on the some stolen parts of our own Vedas, B. K. Sarkar gives a brief and reliable account of what our ancients achieved in his book *Hindu Achievements in Exact Science*.<sup>46</sup> Although important as far as they go, these achievements do not go far enough, considering the long and unbroken stretch of our civilization. We have, on the whole, laid more stress on continuity than on change, on stability than on progress. So we chained our mind to the past instead of allowing it to sally forth into



the future, conquering new worlds, discovering new truths, revelling in new experiences.

Contact with the Muslim world proved a powerful incentive to Europe to emerge out of its Dark Age; why did it turn out otherwise with us? Is it because by the time we come into direct contact with the Muslim culture it had lost its dynamism, or, is it because by that time we had closed minds? Alberuni, a great Muslim savant, who visited our country in the first half of the eleventh century, did record that he found us at times insincere and timid, at other times secretive and arrogant. As regards our arrogance his own words can be quoted: "... the Hindus believe that there is no country but theirs, no nation like theirs, no kings like theirs, no religion like theirs, no science like theirs. They are haughty, foolishly vain, self-conceited, and stolid. They are by nature niggardly in communicating that which they know, and they take the greatest possible care to withhold it from men of another caste among their own people, still much more, of course, from any foreigner. According to their belief, there is no other country on earth but theirs, no other race of man but theirs, and no created beings besides them have any knowledge or science whatsoever. Their haughtiness is such that, if you tell them of any science or scholar in Khurasan and Persis, they will think you to be both an ignoramus and a liar."<sup>47</sup> Now, as regards our timidity, the summary of Alberuni's opinion given by his English translator, E. C. Sachau, may be quoted: "If Brahmagupta teaches two theories of the eclipses, the popular one of the dragon Rahu's devouring the

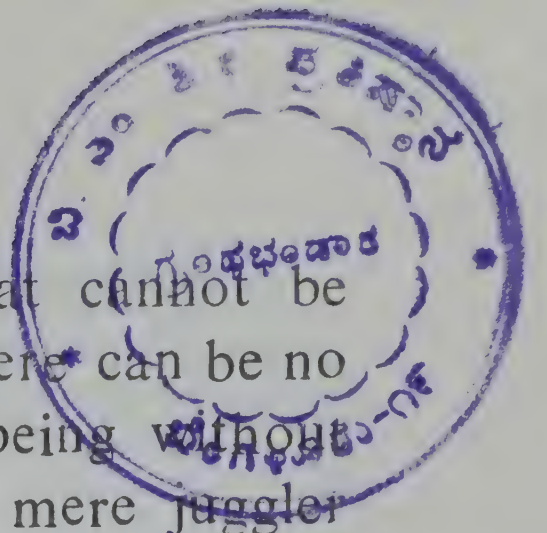


luminous body, and the scientific one, he certainly committed the sin against conscience from undue concessions to the priests of the nation, and from fear of a fate like that which befell Socrates when he came into collision with the persuasions of the majority of his countrymen.”<sup>48</sup>

However, it will be foolish to maintain that the Hindu culture was in no way influenced by its long contact with Islam. But what happened was the two cultures shared their bad points more than their good points. This is nothing uncommon. “In the seventeenth century, when the Manchus conquered China” writes Bertrand Russell, “it was the custom among the Chinese for the women to have small feet, and among the Manchus for the men to wear pigtails. Instead of each dropping their own foolish custom, they each adopted the foolish custom of the other....”<sup>49</sup> A typical parallel that I can immediately think of is the Hindu adoption of the Muslim custom of *purdah* and the Muslim adoption of the Hindu custom of caste.

At this point when I look back over three thousand years, I feel that our intellectual history had taken a wrong turn when Yājñavalkya was preferred to Uddālaka as our national philosopher. Yājñavalkya was arrogant, dogmatic and secretive ; Uddalaka had an open mind, was always ready to experiment, ready to debate. To Yājñavalkya, the soul was real, cows with gold *pads* tied to their horns were also real, only the world was unreal ; to Uddalaka, everything was real, and everything had a material basis. In Yājñavalkya’s view, being was like the sound made by





striking a pot and hence a thing that cannot be grasped ; in Uddālaka's view, just as there can be no sound without pot, there can be no being without matter. In brief, Yājñavalkya was a mere juggler with words, Uddālaka was a philosopher with a scientific spirit. At a time when the kings and princes of his day were building up the idealistic school of philosophy, Uddālaka had the intellectual honesty and the intellectual courage to challenge them by standing up to ask: "You say that the being of this universe was originally non-being. But how is this possible ; How can non-being be being ? Truly, in the beginning, was the being." Uddālaka was, thus, our first scientific-minded philosopher, our world-affirming and life affirming philosopher, our optimistic philosopher. If only we had followed him, rather than Yājñavalkya, how meaningful, how triumphant, how resplendent would have been our intellectual history !

## POVERTY OF INTELLECTUALISM IN INDIA MODERN PERIOD

### LECTURE II

Last evening I closed my lecture on a note of deep regret that about three thousand years ago the choice of Yājñavalkya instead of Uddālaka as our national philosopher had given a wrong twist to our history of intellectualism. I have a feeling, an honest and strong feeling, that at the beginning of the modern period in our history we have again made a wrong choice. Had we really wanted to take a firm and gigantic step into the modern age, we should have preferred Henry Louis Vivian Derozio to Raja Rammohun Roy.

Some of you may wonder who was this Derozio. Although a bold thinker, a fiery poet, a spell-binding teacher, a patriotic son of India, he is almost forgotten. True, he died young; the total span of his life was no more than twenty-two years, but it is no reason why he and his work should be passed over in silence or acknowledged perfunctorily. A half-caste Portuguese, he was born in Calcutta on April 10, 1809. Among some world famous men whose birth-year was the same 1809 were Darwin, Lincoln, Gladstone, Tennyson, Poe and Oliver Wendell Holmes. Had Derozio lived longer for his genius to flower fully, he might have earned a right to join the ranks of such immortals. Although I would love to give a full account of his life, this is neither the place nor the occasion for it. I will, therefore, confine myself



to saying that he was educated in a private seminary run by David Drummond, who was a poet and a free-thinker. Under the loving care and guidance of his teacher, Derozio, too, blossomed into a poet and free-thinker. Such was the brilliance of the young man that at the age of seventeen he was appointed a Lecturer in the newly founded Hindu College. This was in 1826 and just three years later he was dismissed from service. Was he a failure as a Lecturer? No, on the contrary, he was a huge success. He cast a spell on his students and they loved him, they adored him. H. H. Wilson, a Sanskrit scholar and historian, was a visitor of the Hindu College, and he declared more than once that "Derozio taught history as one of philosophic mind would teach it."<sup>1</sup> Rev. W. H. Mill was so much impressed by Derozio's *Objections to the Philosophy of Emmanuel Kant* that he told a large audience that young Derozio's ideas "were perfectly original and displayed powers of reasoning and observation which would not disgrace even gifted philosophers."<sup>2</sup> Why, then, did the authorities of the Hindu College take an intense dislike to him and drive him to tragic death by putting an abrupt end to what he believed to be his life's mission? And why did Wilson, too, vote for his dismissal? The answer to the puzzle is simple. As a man of scientific spirit, Derozio admired Bacon; as a supporter of empiricism, he respected Locke; as an advocate of philosophical skepticism, he esteemed Hume; as a lover of free thought, he had high regard for Voltaire, Diderot, Tom Paine and the other intellectual leaders of the American and French Revolutions. Both



inside the classroom and outside, he was instilling his radical ideas and ideals into his students. In the eyes of the orthodox founders of the Hindu College, can there be a more unpardonable crime? To the charge that he was corrupting the minds of his students, he gave a spirited reply, and though I am going to quote only one-and-a-half sentences from it they are enough to show the stuff he was made of. "I am neither afraid nor ashamed to confess having stated the doubts of philosophers upon the existence of a God, because I have also stated the solution of those doubts...That I should be called a sceptic and an infidel is not surprising as these names are always given to persons who dare think for themselves in religion...."<sup>3</sup>

Though hounded out of the Hindu College and persecuted in other ways, Derozio did not desert the cause of intellectual revolution, and he died on December 26, 1831, with his vision of a free, strong and resurgent India undimmed. One of the best tributes paid to him was by a writer in *The Calcutta Review*, and here it is : "The teaching of Derozio, the force of his individuality, his winning manners, his wide knowledge of books, his own youth, which placed him in close sympathy with his pupils, his open, generous, chivalrous nature, his humour and playfulness, his fearless love of truth, his hatred of all that was unmanly and mean, his ardent love of India, evinced in his conversations and recorded in his lines :

My country in thy day of glory past  
A beauteous halo circled round thy brow,



his social intercourse with his pupils, produced an intellectual and moral revolution in Hindu society since unparalleled.”<sup>4</sup>

During Derozio’s lifetime and in the years which immediately followed his death, a number of associations sprang up in Calcutta, and so did many journals. The aim of all of them was to encourage young men to think for themselves. Francis Bacon is rightly held to be the initiator of the Modern Age, and yet Derozio was insisting that even Bacon’s ideas should not be accepted unexamined. The birth of a highly radical movement called “Young Bengal” was due to the teaching and influence of Derozio. *The Calcutta Review* writing about twenty years after Derozio’s death said that he was the “master-spirit of this new era.”<sup>5</sup> If that era ended too soon, part of the blame for it should be borne by Raja Rammohun Roy.

It is far from my intention to belittle Rammohun. Such a thing would indeed be preposterous. Rammohun was a giant among men. Gandhi was wholly in the wrong when he called him a pigmy; Tagore was very much in the right when he almost chided Gandhi for his unjust verdict. Why should I, then, feel sorry that we chose Rammohun to lead us ignoring Derozio? Frankly, the reason for my sorrow is that Rammohun was too much of an eclectic. Indeed, his eclecticism went so far as to provoke Derozio to remark: “What his opinions are, neither his friends nor his foes can determine. It is easier to say what they are *not* than what they are.”<sup>6</sup> This remark cannot be brushed aside as baseless. Rammohun dressed himself like an aristocratic Muslim, lived like a liberal



Hindu, thought like a Unitarian Christian. His financial interests attached him to the landed gentry and the money-lending fraternity while his intellectual interests made him dream of a world commonwealth based on freedom and justice. In general, he favoured reason, but quite often he veered round to faith. Despite his abhorrence of idolatry, for a time he took to Tantrik practices, which are infinitely worse than idolatry. And there was always an attempt on his part to reconcile the irreconcilables. This was, I believe, responsible for certain ambivalence in his life and temperament.

But for this ambivalence Rammohun would not have failed to realize that one cannot plump both for science and religion. To affirm, as it is often done, that there can be a scientific religion is meaningless. A scientific religion can be neither science nor religion. Rammohun himself had in a way admitted the truth of this contention on an important occasion. When he was opposing the so-called Orientalists and pleading for the spread of English education in India, he stated that religion should give place to science if India were to emerge out of its long darkness. Indeed as you read his letter of 1823 to Lord Amherst, the then Governor-General, protesting against the proposal to start a Sanskrit school, you feel as though you are hearing the pounding of science on the old and rusty gates of India clamouring for entry. With your permission, I would like to quote some salient passages from the letter. "When this seminary of learning was proposed", it says, "we understood that the Government in England had ordered a considerable



sum of money to be annually devoted to the instruction of its Indian subjects. We were filled with sanguine hopes that this sum would be laid out in employing European gentlemen of talent and education to instruct the natives of India in Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Anatomy, and other useful sciences, which the natives of Europe have carried to a degree of perfection that has raised them above the inhabitants of other parts of the world." In contravention of these "sanguine hopes", the letter goes on to state : " We find that the Government are establishing a Sanskrit school under Hindu Pundits to impart such knowledge as is already current in India. This seminary (similar in character to those which existed in Europe before the time of Lord Bacon) can only be expected to load the minds of youth with grammatical niceties and metaphysical distinctions of little or no practical use to the possessors or to society. The pupils will there acquire what was known two thousand years ago with the addition of vain and empty subtleties since then produced by speculative men, such as is already commonly taught in all parts of India. " Turning to the uselessness of an archaic language, the letter says: " The Sanskrit language, so difficult that almost a life time is necessary for its acquisition, is well-known to have been for ages a lamentable check to the diffusion of knowledge, and the learning concealed under this almost impervious veil, is far from sufficient to reward the labour of acquiring it ". And what is that can be learnt through Sanskrit, questions the letter, and proceeds to give an answer : " Neither can much improvement arise from such speculations as the following



which are the themes suggested by the Vedanta.—In what manner is the soul absorbed in the Deity? What relation does it bear to the Divine Essence? Nor will youths be fitted to be better members of society by the Vedantic doctrines which teach them to believe that all visible things have no real existence, that as father, brother, &c. have no actual entity, they consequently deserve no real affection, and therefore the sooner we escape from them and leave the world the better. Again, no essential benefit can be derived by the student of the *Mimamsa* from knowing what is that makes the killer of a goat sinless by pronouncing certain passages of the Vedanta and what is the real nature and operative influence of passages of the Vedas. &c.... The student of the Nyay Shastra cannot be said to have improved his mind after he has learned from it into how many ideal classes the objects in the universe are divided and what speculative relation, the soul bears to the body, the body to the soul, the eye to the ear, &c.”

The real importance of Rammohun's letter is conveyed by what it says next: “In order to enable your Lordship to appreciate the utility of encouraging such imaginary learning as above characterized, I beg your Lordship will be pleased to compare the state of science and literature in Europe before the time of Lord Bacon with the progress of knowledge made since he wrote . . . . If it had been intended to keep the British nation in ignorance of real knowledge, the Baconian philosophy would not have been allowed to displace the system of the schoolmen which was the best calculated to perpetuate ignorance. In the same



manner the Sanskrit system of education would be the best calculated to keep this country in darkness, if such had been the policy of the British legislature. But as the improvement of the native population is the object of the Government, it will consequently promote a more liberal and enlightened system of instruction, embracing Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Anatomy, with other useful sciences, which may be accomplished with the sums proposed by employing a few gentlemen of talent and learning educated in Europe and providing a College furnished with necessary books, instruments and other apparatus.”<sup>7</sup>

It is hard to put the case for science in better or more forcible terms. And yet, why did Rammohun, instead of founding a Bacon Samaj start the Brahmo Samaj? Surely, the only way to foster scientific spirit is not to pray to Brahma but to propogate the thought of Bacon! I do not mean to say that Rammohun was wrong in condemning polytheism, in opposing idol worship, in agitating for the abolition of sati, in disparaging child-marriages, and in fighting the rest of the oddities and crudities of popular Hinduism, but it all amounts to religious and social reform and not to scientific revolution.

It is, of course, possible to argue that to prepare the ground for scientific revolution, Rammohun had first to cut down the jungle of blind beliefs, crass superstitions, stupid customs, and idiotic traditions. This argument has, no doubt, some validity, but two important facts should not be lost sight of. The first point is this: It is quite possible, and in my opinion,



very essential, that social reform should be kept apart from religious beliefs. There are many instances to prove that atheists and agnostics achieved far more in the realm of social reform than theists. Now, I go to the second point: Whether you worship one god or thirty million gods, whether you accept or reject idolatry, the basis of worship is belief and not skepticism, faith and not reason, authority and not freedom. And the *Weltanschauung* (world-view) which worship fosters is not at all conducive to bring about a scientific revolution. Derozio was, therefore, right in starting a secular than a religious association, right in encouraging his students to read Tom Paine's *Age of Reason* rather than this or that religious scripture. In disapproval of this view, some may ask me: "When the European renaissance drew its inspiration from Ancient Greece, what is wrong in Rammohun wanting us to look for inspiration to Ancient India? And is not the best thought of Ancient India found in the Upanishads? I accept that the Upanishads do mark a break in thought with the Vedās and the Brahmanās. I also accept that the questioning spirit is very much in evidence in the Upanishads. But the questions posed in the Upanishads are mostly the wrong ones. Wrong questions do not lead to right answers; a critical study of the history of thought shows that almost every great truth has emerged out of a right question rightly posed. Anyway, having denounced Vedanta, which is said to be the quintessence of the Upanishads, as utterly jejune, Rammohun should not have propagated his own special brand of Vedanta. As his brand of Vedanta is not much different from Unitarianism, it



earned him fame among the Unitarians of Great Britain and North America. But inside India it arrested free thought, it hurt intellectualism. The golden glimmerings of a renaissance which appeared on the Indian sky in the first half of the nineteenth century soon turned very murky indeed.

After the death of Rammohun, Debendranath stabilized Brahmoism, Keshab Chandra Sen converted it into an all-India elitist movement, Shibbanath Sastri made a bid to broaden its base. In the meantime, the Samaj had split into three, the Adi Samaj, the Navavidhan and the Sadharana Samaj. Like politics, religion, too, is a divisive force and sooner or later it is sure to divide its followers into warring sects and subsects. To this general rule, the Brahmo Samaj, in spite of its ideal of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man, was no exception. During its palmy days, it played a fairly important part in the spread of education, in the emancipation of women, in fighting many social evils and even in furthering (though indirectly) the cause of political freedom. It made significant contribution to art, literature and culture, too. While all this is undeniable, what it achieved was the mere scratching of the surface of Indian life and thought. When you debate seriously whether the Vedas are fallible or infallible, when you quarrel about the rightness or wrongness of a preacher from the pulpit wearing the sacred thread, when you believe that if you die with the mystic syllable "OM" on your lips, your reach—as the *Gita* promises—the highest goal, are you really putting your mind to creative use? And yet, all the silly things which I have



mentioned loomed large in the history of the Brahmo Samaj. It is, therefore, not a matter of surprise that it has become moribund; in another generation or two it may die out even in Bengal, its birthplace. "Brahmoism", as Oroon Kumar Ghosh says, "is too deeply imbued in the public image with refined, sophisticated, nose-in-the-air Bangalis of generally the affluent class."<sup>8</sup> There are, therefore, absolutely no chances of its revival.

Unlike the leaders of the Brahmo Samaj, Isvarachandra Vidyasagar looked and lived like a traditional Brahmin. And yet he was no Vedantist. Rarely did he refer to the Vedas or the Upanishads. Never was he seen wasting his time in *pooja* or any other form of worship. Dvijendranath Tagore, the elder brother of Rabindranath, thought that Vidyasagar was an agnostic. Krishna Kamal Bhattacharya, who claimed to be a disciple of Vidyasagar, affirmed that his master was an atheist. Most of the leaders of the Brahmo Samaj were his friends, but he declined to join the Samaj. He was intimate with all the prominent Positivists of Bengal, yet he did not care to take part in their activities.<sup>9</sup> At a time when people were rushing for the *darshan* of Ramakrishna Paramahansa, he avoided calling on him, and when Ramakrishna himself paid him a visit, he showed his visitor all courtesies but refused to be drawn into any metaphysical discussion. From all this, one can safely conclude that Vidyasagar was for reason and not revelation, for man and not God. It is a pity that he confined his activities mainly to the spread of education, especially among women, and to widow-remarriages. Had he



assumed wider responsibilities, he might have succeeded in correcting the wrong direction which the Indian renaissance movement had taken. One of the main reasons for the quick petering out of the “Young Bengal” movement was that the Derozians had no grasp of the nature of Indian tradition and civilization. Being an outstanding scholar in Sanskrit language and in all the branches of Sanskrit literature, religious and secular, and being at the same time fully conversant with Western thought, Vidyasagar could have easily given the correct lead to the Derozians. And yet, why did he hold back? To my mind, his primary reason could very well have been that in his dealing with his fellow-men he had to suffer heartaches too often and too severely. Quite a few people, who owed everything in life to his timely and generous help, turned against him when they had no more use for him. Still, he did not become a cynic, nor did he discontinue to consume himself in the service of the weak, the poor and the disowned. In every respect, he was a great man. Under alien rule, he showed sturdier spirit of freedom than most of us today under self-rule. When inequality between man and man was taken as God-ordained, he was a humanist and an egalitarian. Though he was the greatest Sanskrit scholar of his day (in fact, Vidyasagar was not a part of his name, but a degree he earned for his mastery of Sanskrit), he insisted that unless we take to learning English and other European languages, we will not be able imbibe the modern spirit and emerge into the modern age.

Dayānand Saraswati was no less a Sanskrit scho-



lar than Vidyasāgar. And he was infinitely more zealous, more militant. His life's mission was to uproot popular Hinduism together with its Epics and Purānās, to discard Vedānta together with its Upanishads, its Brahma Sutrās and its Bhagavad Gita, and re-usher the Vedic Age. Dayanand was right in holding that "there was no sanction in the Vedas for caste, for the prohibition of the remarriage of widows, for untouchability, for the taboos on food and the other characteristics of popular Hinduism...."<sup>10</sup> He was no less right in affirming that, of all religions, the Pauranic Hinduism was the most puerile. There is no superstition which it fails to foster, no silliness which it omits to promote. I share Dayanand's revulsion for it.

But it distresses me to see that his revulsion for Pauranic Hinduism made Dayanand swing to the other extreme and to claim that the Vedas are the repositories of all knowledge, including the scientific, revealed by God himself. This large claim on behalf of the Vedas is supported by Aurobindo. "Dayanand affirms", he writes, "that the truths of modern physical science are discoverable in the hymns. Here we have the sole point of fundamental principle about which there can be any justifiable misgivings. I confess my incompetence to advance any settled opinion in the matter. But this much needs to be said that his idea is increasingly supported by the recent trend of our knowledge about the ancient world. The ancient civilizations did possess secrets of science some of which modern knowledge has recovered, extended and made more rich and precise, but *others are even now notre-*



*recovered*. There is then nothing fantastic in Dayanand's idea that the Veda contains truth of science as well as truth of religion. I will even add my own conviction that Veda contains other truths of a science the modern world does not at all possess, and in that case, Dayanand has *rather understated than overstated* the depth and range of the Vedic wisdom."<sup>11</sup> These views of Aurobindo need cause no surprise, for he has tried to show in his own commentary on the Rig Veda that it is a treatise on mysticism which speaks through symbols. Why did it resort to symbols? Is it to prevent the lower orders of the caste hierarchy from access to truths which they are sure to misuse? Anyway, according to Aurobindo, Surya is a symbol for intelligence, Agni for will, Soma for feeling, etc. Why should the burning and blazing and exploding sun, pouring out its energy into boundless space and losing its mass all the time at a fantastic rate, be a symbol for intelligence? Why not for death wish? It is obviously a thing which only a mystic mind can grasp.

In Dayanand's Arya Dharma, there is also a strong element of intolerance. It can perhaps be taken as an echo of the strident note of intolerance found in the Rig Veda. It calls the non-Aryans Dasās and Dasyūs (slaves and thieves), it abhors them as phallic worshippers, it taunts them as noseless, it despises their language as harsh-sounding, indeed, it has not one good word to say about them. The polemics of Dayanand and his followers against Islam and Christianity are no less violent and vituperative.

Like the Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj, too, has certainly taken us a step forward by the rational and



progressive elements of its tenets and its work. Its influence is very much in evidence in the Punjab and in Uttar Pradesh, and to a lesser extent, in Rajasthan. But as in the case of all reformed religions and religious sects, if it has taken us a step forward, it has also pulled us back by two steps.

What the Theosophical Society, in its turn, has done is worse. Without taking us even one step forward, it dragged us back by almost a dozen steps. I am saying this with a full sense of responsibility. As we have seen, the Brahmo Samaj accepted as authoritative scriptures only the Upanishads and rejected the rest. Further, it accepted no Upanishad as a whole or a set of Upanishads in toto. What it did was to make a small selection from different Upanishads. And the selection was done, as we are told by Debendranath Tagore in his *Autobiography*, on the basis of his intuition. Next when we go to the Arya Samaj, we find that it accepted only the Vedās as revealed texts and refused even to look at the rest. But when we come to the Theosophical Society, we observe that it recongnized practically the whole corpus of Hindu religious literature as sacrosanct. Not being content with it, it produced out of the inaccessible recesses of the Himalayas Mahātmās who guide the destinies of mankind by their psychic powers. Madame Blavatsky, the founder of the Society, claimed that she was in psychical as well as physical communication with the Mahātmās. Instead of dismissing all this as balderdash, why did thousands of highly educated Indians, and more so, Hindus, rush, to seek the membership of the Theosophical Society?

001.2

NAR



I generally find myself in disagreement with R. C. Majundar. But he has, I think, provided a correct and highly perspicacious analysis for the tremendous popularity which the Theosophical Society gained first under Madame Blavatsky and later under Annie Besant. With your leave, I proceed to quote him: "There was....a special reason for the English-educated classes to welcome Theosophy. Most of them had no faith in the many current religious and social doctrines, customs and traditions, but had not the courage to openly repudiate them for fear of social ostracism and other serious consequences that were sure to follow. These, 'condemned to live in an agonising mental and moral conflict', found in Theosophy a 'veritable gospel of peace and salvation.' For, by subtle philosophical theories of graded elevation of man by stages, Theosophy defended the current practices of Hinduism. It reconciled the ideal of universal brotherhood with the caste-system, and the fundamental unity of the Supreme Being with the worship of numerous gods and goddesses including the most recent additions to the Hindu pantheon. Nay, more; it held that even such practices as image-worship developed psychic forces. By these means Theosophy helped very materially to remove the 'inferiority complex' from the minds of educated Indians."<sup>12</sup>

I do not know how much good had come out of "the removal of the inferiority complex" to which Majumdar refers, but a lot of harm was done by the Theosophical Society when it trotted out some pseudo-scientific justification or other for practically all of our stupid beliefs, wretched customs and meaningless



traditions. The Society is no longer active, but the climate which it has created is, I believe, primarily responsible for the present mushroom-like outcrop of Bala Yogins and Bhagavāns, Mothers and Messiahs.

I should now refer to Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. The master and the disciple did together exercised a great influence in their lifetime and it still persists. Both of them were Vedantists, but at the same time they were idolaters too. In this particular matter they seem to have followed the example of Ādi Sankarāchārya. I do not know whether Sankarācharya was entering into samadhi, but Ramakrishna and Vivekananda were doing it often. In a recent and highly thought-provoking book, *Vedanta and Bengal Renaissance*, Niranjan Dhar has brought out many facts hitherto unknown about Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. I wish that it would receive wider attention. What I like specially about it is the fact that it explains both frankly and scientifically that “the ‘higher’ mental states of a religious man are actually the mental conditions of a neurotic, subject to hysteric-cum-hypnotic attacks.”<sup>13</sup> As Dhar acknowledges, “Ramakrishna himself was undoubtedly an honest and sincere man”, but, as it generally happens, the unscrupulous people around him turned him into an *avatar* for their own selfish ends.

Like Ramakrishna, Vivekananda too, was very much of a complicated personality. Though a sanyasi, he could not completely cut off his relations with his family nor did he stop bothering about making provision for a comfortable life to his mother and brothers. Again, despite being a sanyasi, he loved to



play the role of a “Hindu Napoleon” bent upon the spiritual conquest of the world and to save the materialist West by carrying to it the message of spiritualist India. In spite of his popularity with the American and European audiences, who were flocking to listen to his eloquent lectures on the spiritual truths garnered from the Vedanta of India, he did not obviously succeed much in saving the ‘materialist West’. But he certainly did one good service to India. It was he who for the first time in the history of Hinduism started a missionary organization. As I said in my first lecture, the karma theory affirms that if one is poor, sick and destitute or if one suffers grievously in such natural calamities as cyclones, earth-quakes, etc., it is all due to one’s own misdeeds in an earlier birth. So, no one need give succour to another. Indeed, to do such a thing is to hinder the operation of a cosmic law. This wretched theory has made the Hindu terribly callous to the sufferings of his fellow-beings. It should be said to the credit of Vivekananda that he was disgusted by this callousness and founded the Ramakrishna Mission. The other members of the Ramakrishna Matt opposed him saying that it was wholly contrary to the Hindu faith and Hindu tradition. But brushing aside their objections, Vivekananda went ahead with his plans.

There is only one more point which I would like to make about Vivekananda. As Swami Agehananda Bharati has pointed out, there is much that is superficial and supercilious in his thought together with much that is daring and original. It was Vivekananda, and not any Indian politician, who was the



very first to say that the coming age is the Age of Socialism. It was, again, he who said that he would prefer our youngmen to play foot-ball for an hour every evening rather than spend that time in reading the Bhagavad Gita.

For a time Bengal came under the influence of Comte and his Positivism. As G. H. Forbes says in his book, *Positivism in Bengal*, "In December, 1883, a small group of Western-educated Hindus gathered at one of the burning *ghats* in Calcutta to celebrate the Festival of All the Dead. This festival had been created by the Frenchman Auguste Comte (1798-1857) as part of a highly complex philosophical system for the reorganization of human society according to his scientific principles. The Religion of Humanity was a culmination of Comte's work, an aspect of his system which had alienated many of his European followers. Strangely, it was in Bengal, an Indian state controlled by Great Britain and thousands of miles from France, that Comte's religion gained a number of followers."<sup>14</sup> The Positivist movement in Bengal, while at its zenith, did help a lot in fostering intellectualism and humanism. But in the Hindu ethos it could not survive for long. "Originally accepted", says Forbes, "as a substitute for Hinduism, it had finally become handmaiden to a newly invigorated Hinduism. Since the Hindu revivalists were also interested in progress they found Positivism's emphasis on serving humanity, subordinating the individual to the good of society, and living for this life rather than some afterlife valuable for their purposes. Just as the Japanese had hoped to fight old feudal and Confucian



values, conceived of as detrimental to modern progress, by borrowing ideas from Positivism and Utilitarianism, the Hindu revivalists wanted to borrow ideas from Positivism and other Western philosophies which would aid in the development of a modern Hindu nation. In the final analysis, it was only under the protective blanket of Hindu revivalism that traditional Hindu values could be mercilessly attacked.”<sup>15</sup>

Now, in some respects Maharashtra was very lucky, for in the 19th century its life and thought was very much dominated, not by Vedantists, but by rationalists. Of these, the prominent were Gopalrao Deshmukh (Lokahitawadi), Jyotirao Fule and Gopal Ganesh Agarkar. All the three opposed the dominance of the priest class, the graded inequalities of the caste system and the inhumanity of untouchability. They also campaigned vigorously for individual liberty and freedom of thought. Of the three, Fule was hailed in his lifetime as a Mahatma and he was indeed a great man. Unlike the other two, his origins were humble; he was a *māli* (gardener), and yet he rose to noble heights in furthering every progressive cause by his sincerity and steadfastness.

A contemporary of these Marathi rationalists was that sincere theist, Mahadev Govind Ranade. Despite the fact that he was a judge of the Bombay High Court, he took active interest in many public causes. In its initial years, he was the guiding force of the Indian National Congress, though for official reasons he had to keep himself in the background. He was the guru of Gopal Krishna Gokhale. He was a great Liberal and a man of the highest integrity.



B. R. Ambedkar was not much of a respecter of persons, but if there were two whom he almost venerated they were Fule and Ranade.

Before I pass on to Gandhi, I would like to make a special point here. While Congressmen in general are religious-minded and believe in astrology, palmistry, t̄antrism, etc., a large majority of the Liberals were rationalists. It was perhaps due to the fact that the Liberals were very much influenced in their life and thought by rationalists like J. S. Mill and Lord Morley.

As I suggested in my first lecture, Gandhi was no intellectual; one can perhaps go a step further and call him an anti-intellectual. During the past two hundred years or more of our history, no other man was a greater creative force as far as action is concerned. But in the matter of thought, his was definitely an inhibitive influence. True, there is no subject to which he did not apply his mind. From latrines to Legislatures, from dietetics to the deity, he had something to say on everything. And yet, one cannot say that he had advanced thought even by an inch. People talk of the Philosophy of Gandhi; frankly, there is nothing of the kind. A philosopher is one who systematizes thought and in the process a genuine philosopher takes into cognizance the latest discoveries of science, and every advance in knowledge. By any stretch of imagination, we cannot call Gandhi a systematic thinker. He had certain beliefs, certain convictions, certain fads. Some of these he borrowed from Hinduism, Jainism and Christianity; some others he adapted from Thoreau, Tolstoy,



Ruskin and Edward Carpenter. It is all as much a hotch-potch of ideas as is found in the Bhagavad Gita. One of the reasons why Gandhi considered the Gita as his supreme scripture can very well be that he saw the reflection of his own mind in its seven hundred verses.

In his lifetime Gandhi published about a dozen books, wrote hundreds of articles and made thousands of speeches. But all this can be taken as mere elaboration of what he said in his little book, *Hind Swaraj or the Indian Home Rule*, written in 1908. In the course of a Foreword which he wrote in 1919 to a new edition, he said that if he had to revise it there was only one word which he would care to alter and that too in fulfilment of a promise he made to an English friend who took exception to his calling the British Parliament a "prostitute". One of the ideas which Gandhi had, thus, stuck to steadfastly throughout his life is that doctors promote indulgence, vice and sin. In what way? For a reply we have to read his *Hind Swaraj*, and here are the relevant passages: "How do....diseases arise? Surely by our negligence or indulgence. I overeat, I have indigestion, I go to a doctor, he gives me medicine. I am cured, I overeat again and I take his pills again. Had I not taken the pills in the first instance, I would have suffered the punishment deserved by me, and I would not have overeaten again. The doctor intervened and helped me to indulge myself. My body thereby certainly felt more at ease, but my mind became weakend. A continuance of a course of a medicine must, therefore, result in loss of control over the mind....I have indulged in



vice, I contract a disease, a doctor cures me, the odds are that I shall repeat the vice. Had the doctor not intervened, nature would have done its work, and I would have acquired mastery over myself, would have been freed from vice, and would have become happy.’<sup>16</sup>

Gandhi was not only against doctors and hospitals but also against lawyers and law courts and even railways. His argument against railways runs thus: “It must be manifest to you that, but for the railways, the English could not have such a hold on India as they have. The railways, too, have spread the bubonic plague. Without them, masses could not move from place to place. They are the carriers of plague germs. Formerly we had natural segregation. Railways have also increased the frequency of famines, because owing to facility of means of locomotion, people sell out their grain, and it is sent to the dearest markets. People become careless, and so the pressure of famine increases. They accentuate the evil nature of man. Bad men fulfil their evil designs with greater rapidity. The holy places of India have become unholy. Formerly people went to these places with very great difficulty. Generally, therefore, only the real devotees visited such places. Now-a-days, rogues visit them in order to practise their roguery.”<sup>17</sup>

In Gandhi’s view civilization itself was a disease. What made him confirmed in this idea was Edward Carpenter’s book *Civilization: Its Cause and Cure*. Had he the power, he would have abolished civilization and taken us back to primitivism. Fortunately for us, he had not that power. This is not to say that modern civilization has not some evils. But, then,



has not primitivism many more of them? Anyway, Gandhi could not avoid the use of railways, steamships, motor cars, telephones and other means of rapid transport and communication which are all the creations of modern civilization. Nor could he avoid the use of hospitals. He had very strong faith in the efficacy of *Ramanama* in curing every disease. "The more I think", he said once, "the more I realize that Ramanama recited from heart and with knowledge is a cure-all for every kind of disease".<sup>18</sup> But when once his life was threatened by appendicitis, what saved him was not Ramanama but an operation in a modern hospital. This kind of conflict between our convictions and our actions cannot be avoided when we are not votaries of rationalism.

Gandhi, being a man of religion, relied primarily on his inner voice than on his intellect. He believed that his inner voice was in fact the voice of God and yet it did not prevent him from blundering a number of times in his long and stormy life. In fact, on one occasion, he said that he had committed "a Himalayan blunder". Further, sometimes his religious spirit made him speak thoughtlessly. When there was a terrible earthquake in Bihar in which thousands of people lost their lives, Gandhi came out with a statement that it was a retribution of God for the sin of untouchability. Surely, untouchability was not practised in Bihar only; it is an evil found all over India. And yet, why should God be angry and punish only the people of Bihar? I can, if I wish, point out many more of such irrational statements made by Gandhi, the man of God. But my admiration for



Gandhi, the humanist, prevents me from criticizing him further. Yet in the interests of truth, I should say frankly that by his anti-intellectualism Gandhi did great injury to India.

Rabindranath Tagore was also a great believer in God. He was, like his father, a believer in mysticism, too. But there was a strong element of rationalism also in his thought. He believed in man, in man's intellect and in man's progress. Indeed, he claimed that his religion was the Religion of Man. In this context I may also remind those who have forgotten it that when Gandhi issued his irrational statement on the Bihar earthquake, Tagore was much irritated and condemned him in strong terms.

Of all eminent Indians of the twentieth century, the one who uncompromisingly stood for materialism and rationalism was M. N. Roy. Had he lived for some more years, he might have made his Radical Humanism a strong force. He did not have a full grasp of Indian thought and culture, but had wide knowledge of Western philosophy, especially of its materialist branch. This is evident from his many books. Among them, *Reason, Romanticism and Revolution* in two volumes is full of seminal ideas. Roy was unsparing in his criticism of Gandhi's ideas, a typical example of which runs thus: "Faith is born of ignorance. If the world remained in the mental state evidenced by the Gandhist confession of faith, it would make no progress. The faithful, unless their profession is hypocritical, are debarred from doing anything to change a given condition of the world. For, otherwise, they would be violating the divine



will, interfering with providential arrangement. They cannot have such antithetical ideas as good and evil, right and wrong, love and hatred, so on and so forth. God being benevolent, the embodiment of goodness, justice, love, everything.....happening in the world must be good and right. Can there be anything more convenient to those who enjoy worldly power and privilege, than this divine philosophy of truth? The masses accepting the established order as divinely ordained, as willed by a benevolent God, its security is guaranteed by the religious view of life. The upper classes can enjoy their power and privileges without any anxiety. Such is the social significance of the spiritual value called faith. And faith is the cornerstone of Gandhism. The whole body of orthodox Hindu philosophy rests upon the self-same cornerstone. It starts from the assumption of a supernatural spiritual being, and sets itself the impossible task of knowing the unknowable. Naturally, it traces knowledge to revelation. Illusion is the source of illumination."<sup>19</sup> Yes, how right is Roy!

I am coming to the end of my lectures, and presently I will be sitting down. Before I do so, I would like to enter my strong plea for the rejection of religion in favour of reason and for the denial of the soul in favour of the mind. We have given a trial for religion for almost ten thousand years now. In fact, we have tried not one religion but hundreds of them. They have ranged from the worship of the tree and the serpent, to the adoration of the sun and the moon. We have made every kind of anthropomorphic god with a multiplicity of hands and heads. We



have conceived a god with the body of a man and the head of a lion and another with the body of a man and the head of an elephant. We have created a goddess with six arms and a blood-dripping tongue. We have taken over gods and goddesses from the aboriginal people with whom we came into contact and fused them into more weird forms. We have promoted and demoted gods. The Vishnu of the Rig Veda, who is a minor god, gets to the top while Indra, the Supreme God of the Vedic times, is reduced to the position of a mere Viceroy with a fairly large harem. The Shiva of the South gets merged with the Rudra of the North to form into the Mahadeva with his own realm of Kailasa. After all these experiments with anthropomorphic gods, we have rejected them in favour of what is called the higher religion of the One Supreme God who is formless, nameless, indefinable and unknowable. We have speculated on the process of creation, on reality and illusion, on karma and rebirth, on heaven and hell, and a hundred and one other things which can neither be proved nor disproved.

Our preoccupation with religion and gods extending over thousands of years—where has all this led to? I cannot say whether our religious speculations and activities have saved individual souls or not, but of one thing I am certain. Neither our religion nor our gods saved us from foreign invasions and depredations, from alien rule and humiliations, from poverty and squalor, from sickness and suffering. We are richly endowed by nature. We have mighty mountains, beautiful valleys, magnificent rivers, rich and



fertile soil, immense mineral wealth, and yet ours is the poorest nation in the world. Indeed, it is said that more than half of the population lives below what is called the poverty line. Why should we find ourselves in such a miserable position?

Our history is unable to tell us definitely who were the first inhabitants of this land. But on the basis of our present knowledge, we may venture to say that after the Dravidians came the Aryans. They were followed by the Iranians, Greeks, Bactrians, Scythians, Parthians, Kushanas, Huns, Turks, Arabs, Afgans, Portuguese, Dutch, French and British. Some of these people settled down here to join the main stream of our national life, the rest retired with caravans of loot in silver and gold and precious stones, most of the loot coming from the temples. In all this turmoil, none of our gods came to our rescue, nor did they save us from the repeated periods of war and bloodshed, death and destruction. In fact, they could not save themselves!

But have we learnt any lesson from our history? Have we taken cognizance of the fact that while we are squabbling over futile speculations about god and religion, the rest of the world, especially, the Western World, has taken a big leap forward. It has girdled the globe, reached the north and south poles, discovered new continents, peered into the boundless wastes of space, located galaxy behind galaxy, journeyed to the moon, is attempting to set foot on planets like the Venus and the Mars, and trying to establish contacts with intelligent forms of life in this vast and expending universe. It has split the atom,



and is learning more and more about the miniature cosmos locked inside. In contrast to this, what are we doing? We have yet to prefer astronomy to astrology, inter-planetary travel to palmistry, and astro-physics to the ashes supposed to be produced out of the void by this bogus Baba or that grizzly Guru.

When I say all this, I know I will be confronted with the groups of Europeans and Americans who are congregating on India to learn our secret lore, our spiritual truths. After being under the overlordship of the white man for almost two centuries, we still suffer from an ill-concealed inferiority complex. If the white man admires anything he finds here, however nonsensical it might be, we immediately think that it should be really something precious. Idiocy is not our exclusive privilege; there are millions of idiots in the Western World, too. Men of vision, men of wisdom are rare in all countries, and in all times. I can say without fear of contradiction that those who are coming over to our country, wearing ochre robes, doing *bhajans*, dancing in our streets singing "Hare Ram! Hare Krishna!" or joining our Yoga Institutes for training or to experiment with hashish and other narcotics, are mostly the drop-outs of the Western society.

My critical reading of world history and culture has made me very allergic to religion. There is no deception, no crime, no cruelty which is not practised under its name. Therefore I find it difficult to stop once I begin to talk about religion. But as I should not let myself go, I will only plead with you once again



that the time has come when we should definitely jettison religion and follow the path of reason.

To follow the path of reason, the first thing which we should do is to reject the concept of a soul. This may sound preposterous, but we should remember that Gotama the Buddha rejected the soul, that the Lokāyatās and the early exponents of Sāṅkhya rejected the soul. It is not therefore something alien to our tradition. As Bertrand Russell says: "One of the 'grand' conceptions which have proved scientifically useless is the soul. I do not mean that there is positive evidence showing that men have no souls ; I only mean that the soul, if it exists, plays no part in any discoverable causal law."<sup>20</sup> When the concept of a soul is thus useless to discover any causal law, why should we cling to it? It may come as a surprise to many who venerate the Upanishads without ever caring to read them that no two of them say exactly the same thing about the soul. They disagree, too, regarding the exact location of the soul. To be sure, we are still unable to know all the intricacies of the mechanism of the conscious and the subconscious layers and sub-layers of what we call the mind. But none can deny that we owe our culture and philosophy, indeed, our very differentiation from the rest of the animal world, to our mind. For millions and millions of years man was just like any other animal. He was physically less strong than most other animals and the defence mechanism which nature provided him was rather poor. He overcame all his natural impediments and started to dominate his world only after he had learnt to use tools ; they were



fashioned out of sticks and stones, bones and horns. The moment he began to use these tools, he rose from the stature of an animal to that of *Homo faber*, then he climbed another step by learning speech and language and that made him *Homo sapiens*, man the thinker. So, to refuse to think is to disown the uniqueness which our mind has conferred on us.

I know that mind is as yet a weak instrument. But it is much more potential than it was ten thousand years ago, five thousand years ago, one thousand years ago. And during the past four or five hundred years it gained unprecedented power. Within these four or five hundred years, science has advanced in rapid strides and it has changed the very tone and texture of the life of the Western man. Before the all round development of science and technology, the life of man was, in the words of Hobbes, “nasty, brutish, and short”. If this is no longer true, we owe it all to our mind which has enlarged the frontiers of knowledge beyond the wildest dreams of a Confucius and a Lao-tse, of a Plato and an Aristotle, of a Yājñavalkya and an Uddālaka. Let us not, therefore, try to murder our mind by opting for yoga. Down from the horned Mahayogi of Harappa, we have had a number of them. Even Mahāvira and the Buddha are seen with half-closed eyes looking inwards. At least for a change, let us begin to keep our eyes wide open to look outwards, to look into the worlds beyond us and to look at the very rim of the universe, and this last thing may yet come within the realm of possibility.

To those who belittle our mind and its powers my



only reply is: "What else have we to claim as our birthright as man?" After the rise of modern psychology, the rationality of the mind, I know, is very much doubted and denigrated. After I presented a paper on "Secularism in Telugu Literature" to a seminar organized some years ago in Simla by the Institute for Advance Studies, I was asked: "Don't you think that the optimism of the 19th century about the rationality of man's mind and about man's steady progress towards perfectability was proved wrong by the two World Wars of the present century?" I said, "Yes". "How, then, can you claim that man has a rational mind?" "Well", I said, "the two World Wars wouldn't have taken place had we fostered the rational mind more assiduously, more successfully. To prevent a third World War, one of the things required is that men with an irrational mind like a Mussolini, a Hitler or a Franco should not be allowed to come into power." The American Revolution owes a large debt to its theoretician Tom Paine, who was a rationalist, and can we say that the American Revolution has been a curse rather than a boon to humanity? Again, the mentors of the French Revolution were men of reason like Voltaire, Diderot, d'Alembert, et al, and in spite of all the violence which accompanied that revolution, can we say that it did not benefit humanity?

In conclusion, I would like to make only one submission to you. The Lokāyata and Charvāka schools of thought were much earlier to the Rig Vedic Age and both of them show that we had the questioning spirit almost unparalleled in the contemporary



world. In the Rig Veda itself we have evidence of skepticism. One hymn-writer wondered: "Who has seen the primeval (being) at the time of his being born." A second one questioned: "Which of these two, (Heaven and Earth), is prior, which posterior; how were they engendered . . . " A third one queried: "Who knows what is the truth, or who may here declare it?" Another dares to ask: "Indra is not, who ever saw him, who is he that we should praise him?"<sup>21</sup> The Chandogya Upanishad compares sacrificial priests to dogs moving round in a circle each catching hold of another's tail in its mouth, chanting "Om, let us eat; Om, let us drink."<sup>22</sup> The Svasamved Upanishad declares: "There is no incarnation, no god, no heaven, no hell; all traditional religious literature is the work of conceited fools; nature the originator and time the destroyer are the rulers of things and take no account of virtue or vice in awarding happiness or misery to men; people deluded by flowery speeches cling to god's temples and priests . . . " The protagonists of Vedanta have ruthlessly suppressed this questioning mind, this skeptical attitude, this rational spirit. As I have indicated in my first lecture, Vedanta is the philosophy of the princes and the priests. In a way, it is a misnomer to call it a philosophy. No less an admirer of India than Max Muller said that the "utterances of the Upanishads", on which Vedanta is based, "will hardly seem worthy of the name philosophy . . . What we find here are philosophic rhapsodies rather than consecutive treatises."<sup>23</sup> Berriedale Keith, agreeing with Max Muller, said: "Those theories are of historic interest: as philosophy they are unworthy



of a moment's consideration." Surendranath Dasgupta, one of the best historians of Indian philosophy, said that the Vedanta "is closed all round by four walls of unproved dogmas: (1) the dogma of the infallibility of the Vedic wisdom, (2) the dogma of emancipation and bondage, (3) the dogma of the law of Karma, (4) the dogma of rebirth. Of these, the first is the primary dogma which is associated with the corollary that reason is unable to discover the truth—a creed which is almost suicidal to any philosophy in the modern sense of the term."<sup>24</sup>

Even if it does not deserve the name of philosophy, Vedanta has always been a powerful ally of vested interests; it served even the British during their overlordship of India very well indeed. It was Henry Thomas Colebrooke, an official of the East India Company, who could see that Vedanta could be an excellent hand-maid to British imperialism. "In 1805", as Niranjana Dhar writes, "Colebrooke published his 'Essay on the Vedas or Sacred Writings of the Hindus' in the *Asiatic Researches*. Here he contended that the Vedas or rather the Vedanta, constituted the authentic tradition of India and that departures from this tradition which we now find were merely corruptions which had crept into it during the subsequent Pauranic period ... A corollary was drawn from this assumption that the authentic tradition should serve as a model for the resurrection of India in future. The obvious implication of this theory was that revolutionary ideas foreign to this tradition should have no relevance for India. In this connection we may mention that the rich materialistic heritage of India, which was more condu-



cive to the popular interest and aspirations, was completely disowned by Colebrooke. It was not that this heritage was unknown to him because he incidentally mentioned it and also gave an account of it in his 'Essay'. He, however, deliberately underplayed its importance for glorifying the idealistic tradition of India." <sup>25</sup>

Though Max Muller, as I pointed out a minute ago, did not think highly of the Vedanta, he endorsed the views of Colebrooke. For, he, too, could realize that it could be a bulwark for the British imperialism in India. The work of these two Indologists in putting Vedanta on the highest pedestal was greatly appreciated by Lord Derby, the Secretary of State for India. According to the noble Lord, "Colebrooke and Max Muller rendered a service to the Government of India more valuable than several regiments of the army." Vedanta is still serving as "more valuable than several regiments of the army" to the ruling classes of the India of today. To free the people from the iron grip of these classes, and to achieve all round progress, Vedanta should be disowned and discarded. What we need is a free mind, a daring mind and a creative mind that accepts any challenge from any quarter. It should not look backwards but forwards. It should soar to the greatest heights and spread to the farthest horizons in quest of new truths, new experiences and new life.



## REFERENCES

### *Lecture I*

1. TIKKER, S. R. (Comp.): *Epigrams from Gandhiji*, New Delhi, 1971, p. 147.
2. RIEPE, DALE: *The Naturalistic Tradition in Indian Thought*, Delhi, 1964, p. 27 ff.
3. RIEPE, 1964, p. 30.
4. DURANT, Will: *The Story of Philosophy*, London, 1948, p. 222.
5. MULLER, Max: *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, London, 1919.
6. MULLER, London, 1919, p. 199.
7. Quoted by MURTY, K. S.: See his *Evolution of Philosophy in India*, Waltair, 1952, p. 42.
8. CHATTOPADHYAYA, Debiprasad: *Two Trends in Indian Philosophy*, Mysore, 1976, p. 29.
9. MULLER, Max, 1919, p. 318.
10. RADHAKRISHNAN, S.: *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, London, 1948, p. 338.
11. HIGHET, Gilbert: *The Mind of Man*, London, 1954, pp. 7-8.
12. Quoted by THEERTHA, Swami Dharma. See his *The Menace of Hindu Imperialism*, Lahore, 1946, p. 307.
13. HAVELL, E. B.: *The History of Aryan Rule in India*, London, pp. 119-120.
14. HAVELL, p. 149.
15. THEERTHA, 1946, p. 115.
16. LONGHURST, A. H.: *The Buddhist Antiquities of Nagarjunakonda*, Delhi, 1938, p. 6.
17. LAW, B. C.: *Historical Gleanings*, Calcutta, 1922, p. 9 ff.
18. RIEPE, 1964, p. 35.
19. ROY, M. N.: *Materialism: An Outline of the History of Scientific Thought*, Calcutta, 1940, p. 94.



20. SHASTRI, Dr D.: *A Short History of Indian Materialism and Hedonism*, Calcutta, 1957, p. 51.
21. MURTY, K. S. : *The Indian Spirit*, Waltair, 1965, pp. 8-9.
22. RAJA, C. KUNHAN : *The Quintessence of the Rigveda*, Bombay Undated, pp. 10-13.
23. KOSAMBI, D. D. : *The Culture and Civilization of Ancient India in Historical Outline*, London, 1965, p. 79.
24. DUTT, R, C. : *Civilization in Ancient India*, Vol. I, London, 1893, p. 65.
25. SCHEWEITZER, ALBERT : *Indian Thought and Its Development* London, 1951.
26. MURTY, 1965, p. 41.
27. BROWN, W. NORMAN : *Man in the Universe*, Calcutta, 1966, p. 49.
28. HUME, R. E. : *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, London, 1954, p. 110.
29. HUME, 1954, p. 110.
30. RIEPE, 1964, pp. 43-44.
31. AIYANGAR, K. V. RANGASWAMI : *Aspects of the Social and Political System of Manusmṛti*, Lucknow, 1949, pp. 92-93.
32. RUSSELL, BERTRAND : *Unpopular Essays*, London, 1950, p. 122.
33. EVANS, BERGEN : *The Natural History of Nonsense*, London, 1948.
34. CHATTOPADHYAYA, Mysore, 1976.
35. OTTO, RUDOLF : *The Original Gita*, London, 1939, pp. 21-33.
36. VAIDYA, C. V. : *The Mahabharata: A Criticism*, Bombay, 1929, pp. 1-10.
37. WINTERNITZ, M. : *A History of Indian Literature*, Vol. I Part-II, Calcutta, 1963, p. 408.
38. OTTO, 1939, p. 15.



39. UTGIKAR, NARAYAN BAPUJI (Ed.): *Collected Works of Sir R. G. Bhandarkar*, Vol. I, Poona, 1933, p. 54.
40. Quoted by DUTT, R. C. See his *Civilisation in Ancient India*, Vol. I, London, 1893, p. 74.
41. DUTT, 1893, p. 232.
42. KUNTE, N. M.: *Vicissitudes of Aryan Civilization in India*, Bombay, 1880, p. 473.
43. MUKERJI, D. P.: *Modern Indian Culture*, Bombay, 1948, p. 16.
44. MUKERJI, 1948, pp. 17-18.
45. MANSINHA, DR MAYADHAR: *History of Oriya Literature*, New Delhi, 1962, p. 105.
46. SARKAR, B. K.: *Hindu Achievements in Exact Science*, New York, 1918.
47. SACHAU, DR EDWARD C. (Ed.): *Alberuni's India*, London, 1914, pp. 22-23.
48. SACHAU, 1914, pp. xx-xxi.
49. RUSSELL, 1950, p. 137.



## REFERENCES

### *Lecture II*

1. MADGE, ELLIOT WALTER: *Henry Derozio: The Eurasian Poet and Reformer*, Calcutta, 1967, p. 7.
2. Quoted by HALDAR, M. K. (Tr.). See his *Renaissance and Reaction in Nineteenth Century Bengal*, Calcutta, 1977, p. 17.
3. MADGE, 1967, p. 8.
4. DATTA, K. K.: *Dawn of Renascent India*, Bombay, 1964, p. 27.
5. MADGE, 1967, p. 10.
6. JOSHI, V. C. (Ed.). Quoted by A. F. S. AHMED in *Rammohun Roy and the Process of Modernization in India*, Delhi, 1975, p. 100.
7. NATESAN, G. A.: *Raja Ram Mohun Roy: His Life, Writings and Speeches*, Madras, 1925, p. 85 ff.
8. GHOSH, OROON KUMAR: *The Changing Indian Civilization*, Vol. 2, Calcutta, 1976, p. 400.
9. HALDAR, 1977, pp. 88-89.
10. PANIKKAR, K. M.: *The Foundations of New India*, London 1963, p. 29.
11. Quoted by SARDA, HAR BILAS. See his *Life of Dayanand Saraswati*, Ajmer, 1946, pp. 397-98.
12. MAJUMDR, R. C. (Ed.): *British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance*, Part II, Bombay, 1965, pp. 132-133.
13. DHAR, NIRANJAN: *Vedanta and Bengal Renaissance*, Calcutta 1977, p. 115.
14. FORBES, G H.: *Positivismi Bengal*, Calcutta, 1975, p. 1.
15. FORBES, 1975, p. 158.
16. GANDHI, M. K.: *Indian Home Rule*, Madras, 1924, p. 61.
17. GANDHI, 1924. p. 44.
18. GANDHI, M. K.: *Ramanama*, Ahmedabad, 1964, p. 59.



19. ROY, M. N.: *Fragments of a Prisoner's Diary: India's Message*, Vol. II, Calcutta, 1950, pp. 220-21.
20. RUSSELL, BERTRAND: *Unpopular Essays*, London, 1950, p. 172.
21. RIEPE, DALE: *The Naturalistic Tradition in Indian Thought*, Delhi, 1964, pp. 22-23.
22. MURTY, K. S.: *The Indian Spirit*, Waltair, 1965, p. 241.
23. MURTY K. S.: *Evolution of Philosophy in India*, Waltair, 1952, p. 97.
24. RADHAKRISHNAN, S. (Eds.): *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, London, 1958, p. 253.
25. DHAR, NIRANJAN: *Vedanta and Bengal Renaissance*, Calcutta, 1977, pp. 31-32.







### Corrigendum

Page 7 line 20 *for* " to call a spade " *read* " to call a spade  
a spade "











## Some other Special Lectures

1. History and Pre-History of Sanskrit
2. Role of Foreign Exchange and finance in India's Development plan
3. Minimum wages in India
4. Aspects of Bhakti
5. Gokhale and Sastri
6. Buddha and Basava
7. Law and Society in India
8. The Modern company and the Rule of Law
9. The Social Science and Human Affairs
10. Restoration of Economic stability
11. Post-war Reconstruction
12. Yoga as a Therapeutic Fact
13. What is mathematics
14. Promotion of Gandhian philosophy
15. Introducing the middle East
16. Some Aspects of Democratic politics in India
17. Education and the New India
18. The Humanism of Tagore
19. Some Thoughts on Indian Aesthetics and Literary Criticism
20. Three lectures on Music
21. The Buddhist out look
22. Gandhian Contribution to Indian Economy
23. Lectures on Art
24. The Atomic power programme of India
25. Some aspects of the poetry of Tagore
26. Non-Alignment : India and the future
27. Kashmiri literature
28. When there was no democracy
29. Indian parliament : A critical Study
30. Centre state relations in India
31. Far Eastern philosophies
32. India and the world
33. India and west Asia
34. Science and Society
35. Two trends in Indian philosophy